



THE TIMES

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Straw acts over Lawrence inquiry

Ethnic quota system for police forces

By RICHARD FORD AND STEWART TENDLER

JACK STRAW is ordering chief constables to treble black and Asian recruitment as part of an effort to salvage the reputation of the police before the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report is published.

A national target of 7 per cent of officers from ethnic minorities will be imposed with forces required to introduce quotas, even in areas that are overwhelmingly white.

The Home Secretary also intends to punish officers convicted of serious disciplinary offences by cutting their pensions by up to 75 per cent. That penalty would apply to officers found guilty of neglect of duty — the charge levelled against the second-in-command of the Lawrence murder inquiry.

Mr Straw is due to receive Sir William Macpherson of Cluny's report on the Lawrence inquiry next week and he wants to bolster public confidence in the service before it is published.

However, he does not want Sir Paul Condon to step down as head of Scotland Yard. Mr Straw is said to fear that police morale would be shattered if Sir Paul was forced to quit, and he regards Sir Paul as the best man to start reforming the Metropolitan Police.

Yesterday Mr Straw outlined his strategy for countering the racist "canteen culture" in the police, putting pressure on chief constables to take to firmer action to recruit more blacks and Asians.

A new report from the Inspectorate of Constabulary shows the few forces, apart from the Metropolitan Police, are doing enough to recruit more officers from ethnic minorities or improve community relations — in spite of being warned to do so a year ago.

Now Mr Straw is to set a national target to triple the number of black and Asian officers. At present only 2,500 of the 127,000 police officers in England and Wales are black or Asian, with 865 of them in London.

Each force will also set its own target and no chief constable will be able to plead that he cannot increase the number because of the absence of ethnic minorities in his area.

Mr Straw signalled to the Commons Home Affairs Committee that he had lost patience with the slow progress being made by individual forces. He disclosed that a fifth of the forces in England and Wales had fewer than ten officers from ethnic minority backgrounds and that some thought they were white-only areas.

Cheshire has seven black or Asian officers, Cumbria two, Dyfed Powis one, Lincolnshire seven, Dorset six, Devon & Cornwall five, North Wales two and North Yorkshire seven.

"I want to see all forces set targets to recruit black and Asian police including those forces which happened to think they are wholly white areas," Mr Straw said.

And although the targets would vary between forces, he would not accept, for example, North Wales setting a target of doubling its existing strength from two to four. While the force's area had only a small ethnic minority population, it was close to Merseyside and black and Asian people visited North Wales.

Mr Straw also disclosed that not one black or Asian officer who had applied to join the police service's accelerated promotion scheme had been successful in the past five years. Eighty-five officers had applied for 13 places on the scheme last year, but none had been chosen.

At the same time Mr Straw is examining legislation which would cost an officer up to 75 per cent of his pension after conviction of "top-level" discipline breaches, such as very serious neglect of duty. At the moment the penalty is limited to officers convicted of very serious criminal offences and rarely used. Police can receive up to two-thirds of their salary on retirement and the move could cost a bad officer hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Mr Straw told MPs yesterday that an officer could have his pension cut if found guilty of neglect of duty — the type of allegation made against officers in the Lawrence inquiry. Detective Inspector Ben Bullock, once the second in command of the Lawrence murder investigation, faces seven counts of neglect of duty.



Among the Oscar rivals to the Bard: Brenda Blethyn, nominated for *Little Voice*, and Emily Watson, nominated for *Hilary and Jackie*

Hollywood in love with Shakespeare

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH costume drama romped into the lead in the Oscar nominations yesterday. The romantic comedy *Shakespeare in Love* is in the running for 13 of the awards. One of its main rivals is the British-made historical drama *Elizabeth*, which has seven nominations.

Shakespeare in Love, made in Britain with American money, tells the story of a doomed romance set against the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*. Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman have been dominated for their screenplay, John Madden for his direction and Gwyneth Paltrow as best actress, Judi Dench, who plays Elizabeth I, is up for best supporting actress.

Hearing the news, Dame Judi — who was nominated last year for her performance as Queen Victoria in *Mrs Brown* — said: "There aren't any more queens to play, just Boadicea with one breast."

In comparison, the Steven Spielberg war movie *Saving Private Ryan* —

American made but filmed largely in Hertfordshire and Ireland — received 11 nominations, including best picture, director, and actor for Tom Hanks. *Elizabeth*'s seven include best actress and best picture.

What surprised the film industry was that neither Michael Caine nor Jane Horrocks were singled out for *Little Voice*, the film about a seedy, small-time agent who tries to exploit the singing talents of a young girl. However, Brenda Blethyn, who plays the singer's raucous mother, was nominated for best supporting actress.

Musicians who had voiced despair over the British-funded *Hilary and Jackie*, which portrays Jacqueline du Pré as sex-crazed, may be concerned that Emily Watson, 32, is in the running for best actress for her role.

The actress said the film was "a very conscientious and complex piece — it is not a piece of tabloid journalism". She said her nomination was "amazing and thrilling — you never really think like that especially with a film like this. It's a little film with a small budget."

Blair's attack on arms report shocks MPs

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND VALERIE ELLIOTT

DAMNING criticism by a Commons committee of the Foreign Office and its most senior official over their behaviour in the arms-to-Africa affair was contemptuously swept aside by Tony Blair and Robin Cook yesterday.

The Prime Minister astonished MPs and infuriated the Foreign Affairs Committee by rejecting its attack on Sir John Kerr, Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office, who had been accused of failing in his duty to ministers — probably the most serious charge that can be levelled at an official.

Both Mr Blair and the Foreign Secretary, whose offensive against the report had been planned days in advance, declared that there was nothing new in it that had not been uncovered in the official government inquiry by Sir Thomas Legg QC.

Mr Blair said that the criticism of officials made by the committee, which is chaired by the senior Labour backbencher, Donald Anderson, was "disproportionate and unfair". Responding to a report that castigated civil servants for a catalogue of "serious shortcomings" and "appalling failures", Mr Blair called on

rejecting its attack on Sir John Kerr, Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office, who had been accused of failing in his duty to ministers — probably the most serious charge that can be levelled at an official.

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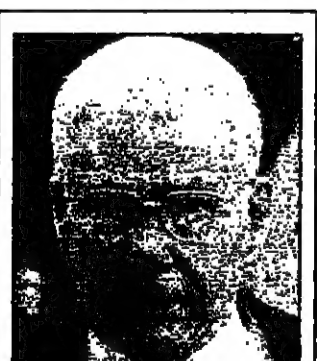
MPs "not to judge too much with the benefit of hindsight".

In an unusual move Mr Cook issued a minute to Sir John in which he said the report found no evidence of connivance or conspiracy by anyone in the Foreign Office to breach an arms embargo.

Conservatives said the reaction showed that the Government could not take criticism from any quarter and Michael Howard called on Mr Blair to dismiss Mr Cook.

Mr Anderson, upset at the Government's reaction, said it was absolutely absurd to say they had discovered nothing new. "A mechanism that prides itself on being a Rolls-Royce appeared more like an old banger."

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CIA's Diana file to go to Fayed

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

A JUDGE has ordered American intelligence agencies to hand their 1,000-page dossier about Diana, Princess of Wales, to Mohammed Al Fayed.

Mr Al Fayed won subpoenas against the US Defense Intelligence Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency because, as father of Diana's lover, he is an "interested party". The agencies now have 30 days to challenge the order, issued by the US District Court in the District of Columbia.

The National Security Agency has conceded that it had "39 NSA-originated and NSA-controlled documents" about the Princess. They were classified top secret because their disclosure could "cause exceptional grave damage to the national security", and a judge in Maryland declined a previous request for their release saying that such a move would be extremely ill-advised.

The new order was hailed as a breakthrough by John Macnamara, head of security for Mr Al Fayed's House of Fraser group. He said: "It is a tremendous step forward. We know that they were monitoring Diana right up until the night of her death. During that time she was talking constantly to the Brazilian ambassador's wife. She may even have said to her on Saturday that they were announcing their engagement on Monday."

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Europe finds London has a heart of gold

By CHARLES BREMNER
AND ROLAND WATSON

CENTRAL London was crowned yesterday as the richest area in the European Union. The 2.7 million residents in the heart of the capital enjoy wealth more than twice the rate of the EU average, a new survey reported.

However, the contrast between the capital and the vast majority of the rest of the UK is marked. As a country, Britain has the biggest disparities between rich and poor regions and comes only 10th out of 15 in the EU wealth league.

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are the poorest places in the country, registering just 70 per cent of the EU average. Most other British regions record below the average — of 100 per cent — according to the survey produced by Eurostat, the EU's Luxembourg-based statistical office.

London appears to owe its top regional spot to a redrawing of the boundaries which for the first time separate inner and outer London and as a result push Hamburg into second place.

Inner London measures 222 per cent but taken as a whole London's rating sinks to 138 per cent, well outside the top ten areas, five of which are German.

In the rest of Britain, the figures go some way to reinforcing the image of a North-South divide, though North-Eastern Scotland registers second in the national rating with a reading of 127 per cent. Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire are all rated highly, along

with Cheshire, Wiltshire and North Somerset. The only other areas to figure above the EU average are Cumbria, East Wales, the South-East, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northants, Eastern Scotland, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. From the bottom, West Wales and the Valleys with 71 per cent show only fractionally above Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. That equates to Portugal's national wealth showing of 70 per cent, and Greece's 66 per cent.

Luxembourg is the richest country, followed by Denmark, Belgium, Austria and Germany.

London's new "super rich" status could work against Britain as ministers try to argue for the retention of the £2 billion-a-year rebate from Brussels.



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There are moments in the history of these islands where the issue is just too grave to be trivialised by party-political squabbling. At such an hour when fear and outrage stalk the land, men and women of goodwill lay aside their political allegiances to reason together.

We then see the House at its best. Thus it must be during wars and national emergencies. Thus it was during the Abdication Crisis.

And thus it is in all questions relating to the Kent railways.

The horror film *The Exorcist* is to be available uncut on video. A quarter of a century after it was made, it has been passed by the British Board of Film Censors under its new director, Robin Duval. Although long considered too disturbing for home viewing, the video has been granted an 18 rating.

A member of the Standard Life Group

ly and Mr Mossion were later dropped by the Labour Party after the Court of Session granted them a judicial review. The men were then allowed to rejoin the party.

Yesterday Mr Lally, who has held the Lord Provost's post for three years and led Glasgow City Council for eight years, said he was leaving in May to write his memoirs. "I decided it was better to go when I was at the top. Glasgow is now UK City of Architecture. That's a high point for the city and it seemed a good time to go."

Mr Lally declined to name his predecessor.

Accused in war crimes trial 'embraced the Final Solution with enthusiasm'

Tim Jones on court allegation that former BR ticket collector was one of first to volunteer for Nazi police

BRITAIN'S first war crimes trial was told yesterday that the 77-year-old accused man had helped to kill Jews "with enthusiasm" after embracing the Nazi policy of the Final Solution.

Anthony Sawoniuk faces four charges of murder under the War Crimes Act of 1991, of committing murders "in circumstances constituting a violation of the laws and customs of war".

That, between September 19 and 27, 1942, in Domachevo, Belorussia, a town under German occupation, he murdered a Jewess; that, between September 19 and October 4, 1942, in Domachevo, he murdered a Jew known as Schlenker; that, between the same dates, in Domachevo, he murdered another Jewess; and that, between September 19, 1942, and December 31, 1942, also in Domachevo, he murdered a Jew known as Mir Barlas.

John Nutting, QC, for the prosecution, told an Old Bailey jury in measured, dispassionate tones of the horror that befell the predominantly Jewish village of Domachevo after it had been overrun by the Nazi war machine in 1941.

Mr Sawoniuk, a former British Rail ticket collector from Bermondsey, South London, displayed no emotion as Mr Nutting outlined the case against him in a crowded Court No 12. Dressed in a brown suit and checked cardigan, he sat not in the dock but in the well of the court.

Mr Nutting said that Mr Sawoniuk was among the first to volunteer for the local police force set up by the Nazis who, on the Yom Kippur holy day in September 1942, massacred 2,900 Jews. Some other Jews had managed to flee to a forest or to hide in the village ghetto, where they were confined behind barbed wire.

Although there is no evidence that Mr Sawoniuk, who was made commander of the police force, took part in the original massacre, he was prominent in the search-and-kill operation aimed at those who had escaped.

Referring to the four murder charges, Mr Nutting said: "On each count, say the Crown, this defendant executed Jewish men and women whose only offence was to be Jewish and who had escaped the main massacre of several thousand Jews when the ghetto in Domachevo was liquidated."

"The evidence indicates, in our submission, that the defendant not only was prepared to do the Nazi bidding but carried out their genocidal policy with enthusiasm."

Five days after the main

THE CHARGES

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massacre, Mr Nutting said, one witness, Alexander Baglay, and a friend were taken to the sand hills. They saw two Jewish men, aged about 40, and a Jewish woman, aged about 20, who were wearing the distinctive yellow patches on their clothing.

Mr Sawoniuk ordered the Jews to undress, Mr Nutting said. The girl was too embarrassed to remove her clothes until Mr Sawoniuk shouted at her. He ordered the Jews to face the ready-dug grave, took out his pistol and shot each one in the head from behind. As he fired, he pushed each victim forward into the grave.

Mr Sawoniuk ordered the two young men to fill in the grave and return the shovels to the police station.

Another witness, Fedor Zan, Mr Nutting said, recalled a day when he heard women crying on the outskirts of the town. Keeping hidden, he went to investigate and saw about 15 Jewish women of mixed ages standing in front of an open grave.

"The defendant was standing behind the women armed with a sub-machinegun," Mr Nutting said. "He ordered the women to remove their clothes and then shot them with the

weapon. As they died, they collapsed into the grave."

Mr Zan, he said, had known Mr Sawoniuk since their schooldays. "He had watched the defendant's transition from schoolboy to policeman, from being just another youngster to being one of those exercising a ruthless authority over Jew and gentile alike."

Mr Nutting said that Mr Zan had seen Mr Sawoniuk taking his aunt and her family to their executions because of their suspected association with anti-Nazi partisans in the forest.

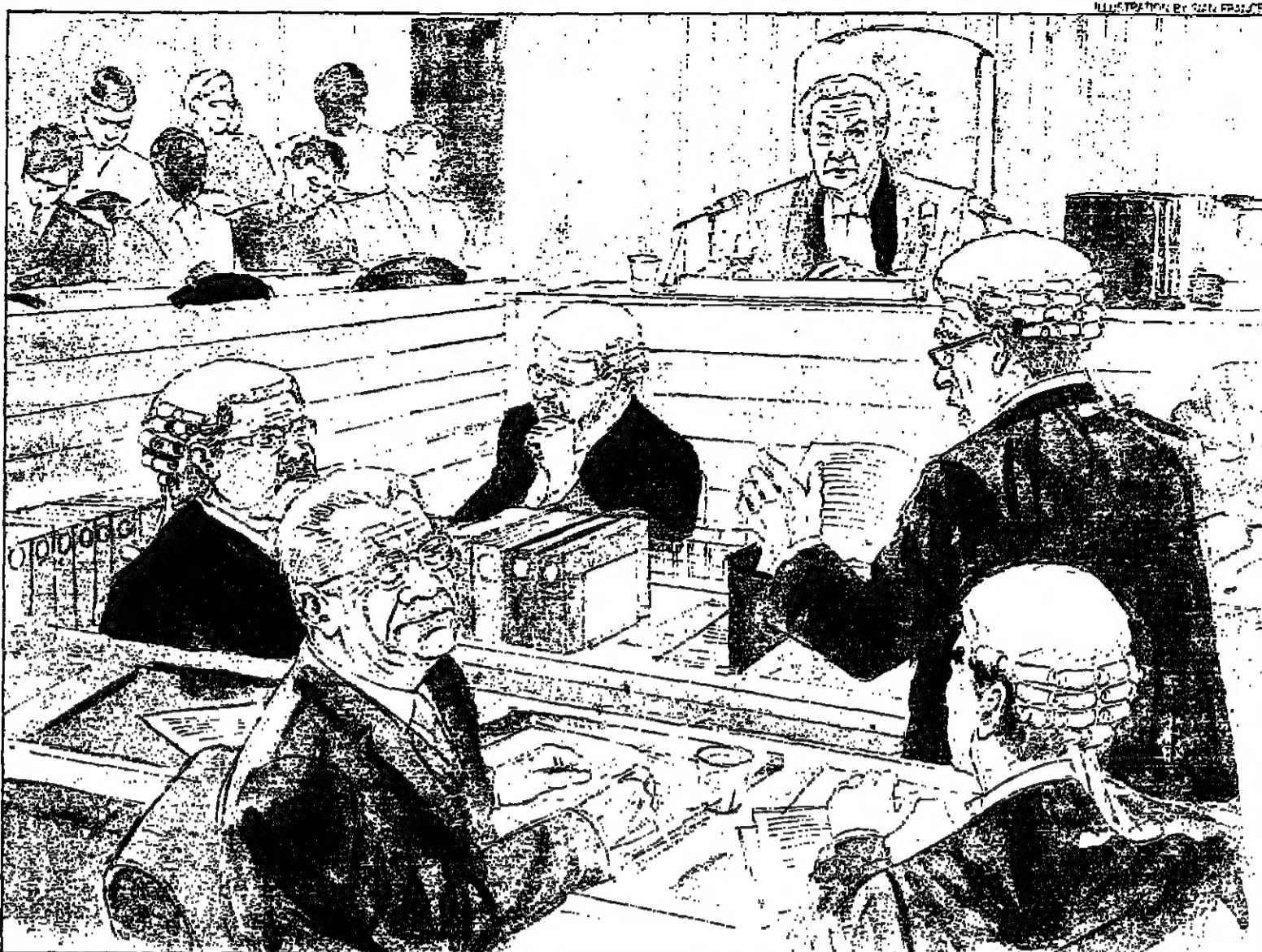
Another witness, Ivan Sepaniuk, saw Mr Sawoniuk and another policeman escort a 50-year-old Jew named Shlenko towards the execution site among the sand hills. Mr Sawoniuk, he said, was hitting the Jew with a spade, causing him to fall. About two minutes later, Mr Sepaniuk said, he heard a single shot from among the trees.

On another occasion another witness, Ben-Zion Blustein, saw Mir Barlas, a Jew aged about 21, being taken from the police station by the Germans and handed over to Mr Sawoniuk and two other policemen. "The defendant and the other policemen took him in the direction of the sand hills. The witness never saw Barlas again."

"A few days after this incident, the witness asked the defendant what had happened to Barlas. The defendant said that Barlas had been in a good mood before he was shot."

Mr Nutting said that Mr Blustein, who had stayed with his family in a little hidden place for eight days, remembered an incident in which he saw a number of policemen taking an 80-year-old Jew into the street, setting fire to his beard and stabbing him.

Mr Nutting said that Mr Sawoniuk, who was born in the village, came from a poor family. His mother earned money by washing household items and clothes for Jews. Mr Sawoniuk used to earn pocket money by lighting fires, chopping wood or fetching water for them on the Sabbath. Everyone in Domachevo knew Mr Sawoniuk by the nickname of



An artist's impression of the Old Bailey court where Anthony Sawoniuk faces War Crimes charges described by John Nutting, QC

Andruska, which he acquired at an early age.

"That name is so fixed in the consciousness of the survivors from that period that those who do not remember the defendant's Christian or surname remember him as Andruska," Mr Nutting said.

Mr Sawoniuk had married a Russian midwife called Anna during the Nazi occupation, but she was killed in crossfire during a partisans' attack on the police station.

Before the war most of the inhabitants of the thriving spa town of Domachevo were Jews. Only 10 per cent were Poles, Ukrainians and Belarussians. "The relations between the races in this area was generally peaceful and harmonious and there was little anti-semitism," said Mr Nutting. All that changed after the Nazi invasion.

Mr Nutting said: "It is apparent that the defendant carried out his police duties as a policeman conscientiously. He frequently searched Jews on

their journeys in and out of the ghetto and if he found any forbidden item in the possession of a Jew, he invariably assaulted the culprit."

"One day a young Jewess, on return to the ghetto from work on a farm, tried to smuggle some potatoes into the ghetto. Mr Sawoniuk found them, beat her savagely, arrested her and put her in detention."

"It is clear that the Germans had greater faith in the defendant than in most of his colleagues in the police force. Not only did they promote him, but he was also permitted to

carry a firearm at all times."

Mr Nutting said that, when interviewed by Scotland Yard officers investigating war crimes, Mr Sawoniuk, who came to Britain shortly after the Second World War, initially denied being in the police. He said that he had been deported to do forced labour in Germany.

However, he did not now dispute that he served as a policeman in Domachevo at the relevant time, nor that he was regarded by others as a senior officer. "nor that he left Domachevo in 1944 in compa-

ny with the Nazis as they fled. However, by his plea of not guilty, he denies participation in the murders on the four occasions described in the indictment."

Mr Sawoniuk had told Scotland Yard that anyone who accused him of killing Jews was an idiot, because the Jews had helped him by giving him food when he worked for them and that "he would not go against such people".

"Those who had made the allegations 'destroy other people's lives. If I was guilty I would tell my solicitor, so I vol-

unteered to come to the police station and tell you what I can."

"No one can put a finger on me that I killed a Jew. The people who gave you that evidence are liars. The people over there will tell you anything for a couple of bob. They know nothing about what went on during the war."

"Those people still living in Domachevo probably did more damage than I did and I did no damage at all. They are still there and I have to suffer. The people who have given evidence to you are lying."

The trial continues.

'He ordered Jews to face the ready-dug grave, took out his pistol and shot each one in the head from behind'

Trainspotting author went off the rails

BY SUSIE STEINER

IRVINE WELSH, the best-selling author of *Trainspotting*, has re-enacted the gritty social realism of his novels with a five-hour spell in a police cell. He was arrested for being drunk and disorderly after travellers complained of abusive behaviour on a train from London to Exeter.

Welsh, 41, who earns an estimated £1 million a year in royalties from his novels, was met from the train at Exeter's St David's station by British Transport Police. Inspector Nick Garrold said: "Mr Welsh continued to be quarrelsome and was arrested for being drunk and disorderly. He was put into the cells to sober up and reflect. He was released about 5½ hours later after having been formally cautioned."

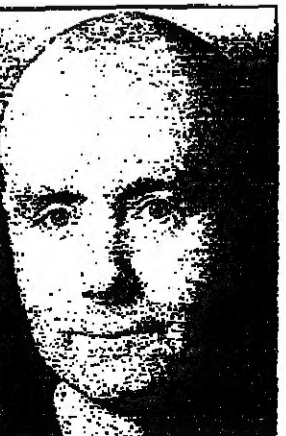
Welsh, who alternates between homes in North London and Edinburgh's New Town, suffered punishing reviews last week after the opening of his play, *You'll Have Had Your Hole*, at London's Astoria. The play, featuring anal rape, torture and drug-taking, peppered with expletives, was described by one critic as "the most obnoxious and contemptible" he had seen.

A spokeswoman for Welsh said yesterday that the author's arrest last Friday came as a result of continued partying in celebration of the play's opening night last Wednesday. "There was a major celebrity party after the first night, when Irvine started drinking for the first time since Christmas. He continued celebrating until Friday, and that led

to his arrest." Welsh was unavailable for comment.

After his release from the police cell at around 11pm, Welsh headed straight for the Cavern Club, in central Exeter. The club's co-owner Patrick Cunningham said: "He was getting on well with everybody. A few people recognised him and were buying him drinks. We chatted about music and literature, all sorts of things."

Welsh is best known for *Trainspotting*, a brutal tale of heroin addiction, which was made into one of Britain's most successful films. Then came a critically acclaimed collection of short stories, *Acid House*, the novel *Ecstasy*, and his latest book, *Filth*. Last week Welsh said: "The sordid content of the majority of West End plays and the cricket Test ambience of the theatre seems designed to keep a younger, hipper crew away."



Welsh: rail passengers complained about him

Rowland widow is left £26m in will

BY JOANNA BAILE

THE widow of Tiny Rowland, the business magnate, has been left more than £26 million in his will.

Mr Rowland, who died of cancer in July aged 80, had a fortune estimated at £650 million, most of which was held in a complex series of offshore trusts and funds. He was said to have been wryly amused by the fact that his wealth three years ago equated with that of the Queen.

The will, which was published yesterday, is understood to relate only to his assets in Britain, including family houses in Chester Square, Belgrave and Bourne End, Buckinghamshire. The sum also includes the value of his 150ft yacht, the *Hanse*, shares registered in Britain and several bank accounts he used for everyday expenses.

His widow, Josie, and their son and three daughters are also expected to benefit from the rest of his fortune, much of which is banked in Switzerland. The children, Toby, Andra, Louisa and Plum, are all in their twenties and unmarried.

Toby, 28, owns a flat off Eaton Square, Belgrave, and works for the Walt Disney company. Andra and Louisa share a flat off Chester Square, Belgrave, while Plum lives with her mother.

The couple married 30 years ago when she was 24. He had known her all her life as the daughter of an engineer who ran factories for him in Britain and who became his farm manager in Rhodesia.



Mosley: 37 years in Coronation Street

TV soap actor dies

BY CLAUDIA JOSEPH

THE cast of Coronation Street was in mourning last night after one of its best-loved members, Bryan Mosley, died at the age of 67.

Mr Mosley, who until New Year's Eve had played the portly shopkeeper Alf Roberts in the Granada soap opera, collapsed in the street in Shipley, West Yorkshire, yesterday afternoon. He and his wife, Norma, were withdrawing money for a holiday in Venice when he is believed to have had a heart attack.

Mr Mosley, who had suffered heart problems in the past, was taken to Bradford Royal Infirmary, but was pronounced dead on arrival. His ill health had been behind the producers' decision to retire him from the programme after appearing in it since 1961.

William Roache, who plays Ken Barlow, said: "We had hoped that, after his retirement, Bryan would have had many more years with his family. He was a very good man and a great actor. He will be sorely missed."

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Councils will be forced to house refugees

JACK STRAW is to order local authorities to make empty houses and hostels available for asylum-seekers.

The new power is part of the Government's plan to move asylum-seekers from London and the South East to be accommodated in clusters in the rest of England and Wales.

Mr Straw will create "reception zones" in local authority areas where there is vacant housing, if councils refuse to co-operate with offering accommodation to asylum-seekers.

The new power was unveiled yesterday as the Government pub-

The Government is to take powers to disperse asylum-seekers around the country, reports Richard Ford

lished a 130-clause Bill to overhaul the United Kingdom's asylum and immigration system.

Under the proposals, which will come into force by April 2001, social security benefits to asylum-seekers will be scrapped and replaced with vouchers to be exchanged at shops for food and clothing.

Asylum-seekers will be dispersed around the country in bed and breakfast hotels, hostels and empty council housing, which individuals will be unable to reject.

Mike O'Brien, the Immigration

Minister, denied that the plan would mean asylum-seekers being dumped on sink housing estates. He said: "The aim of this policy is to place asylum-seekers in clusters in areas where there is some element of support. We think that this is the best basis to ensure that asylum-seekers will not drift back to London and the South East."

If local authorities do not co-operate, the Government will create a reception zone and order a council to make vacant housing available. If asylum-seekers refuse to co-operate

the Government will have the power to stop issuing vouchers to them. Mr Straw denied that such a move would lead to any asylum-seeker facing starvation.

He did not explain how the voucher system would operate, who would issue the vouchers or what would be their value.

The Immigration and Asylum Bill also includes powers to tackle the problem of bogus marriages intended to get round the immigration laws, and regulation of immigration advisers who prey on

vulnerable asylum-seekers and immigrants.

Registrars are to be given the power to request evidence of name, age and marital status and nationality from couples seeking to be married. They will be placed under a statutory duty to report suspicions that a marriage is being contracted for the purpose of evading immigration control. The Bill also ends the "quickie" wedding by introducing a 15-day notice period for marriages.

Immigration advisers are to be

regulated, with each firm paying £6,300 a year for regulation. Any non-regulated person giving advice faces a maximum two-year jail term.

The Bill also includes measures to speed up the appeals system, with the aim of stopping asylum seekers stringing out their cases. The Government hopes that original asylum decisions will be completed within two months and any appeals in a further four months, though Home Office sources admit that this is an "ambitious target".

Bail hearings will be introduced for immigrants and asylum seekers held in detention centres.

The Bill, the most comprehensive overhaul of asylum and immigration laws since 1971, is aimed at introducing a faster, firmer and fairer system to deal with a backlog of 73,000 cases and cutting asylum applications, which last year reached a record 46,000.

Last night the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants described the Bill as a missed opportunity that continued the old heavy-handed controls.

Leading article, page 17

Scores die in heaviest snow across Europe for decades

By ADAM SAGE IN PARIS, ADAM SHERWIN AND ADRIAN LEE

THE heaviest snowfalls for decades blanketed much of Western Europe yesterday, causing scores of deaths and stretching rescue services to breaking point.

Some of the worst conditions were in the Alps, where a vast area was put on avalanche alert. In France, rescuers were last night still trying to reach survivors believed to be trapped in 20 chalets that were buried under tons of snow in the ski resorts of Le Tour and Montroc in the Chamonix valley. At least two people, a young girl and a man, were confirmed dead.

Some of the 200 rescuers used skis to reach the hamlet of Le Tour, because roads were blocked. Twenty people

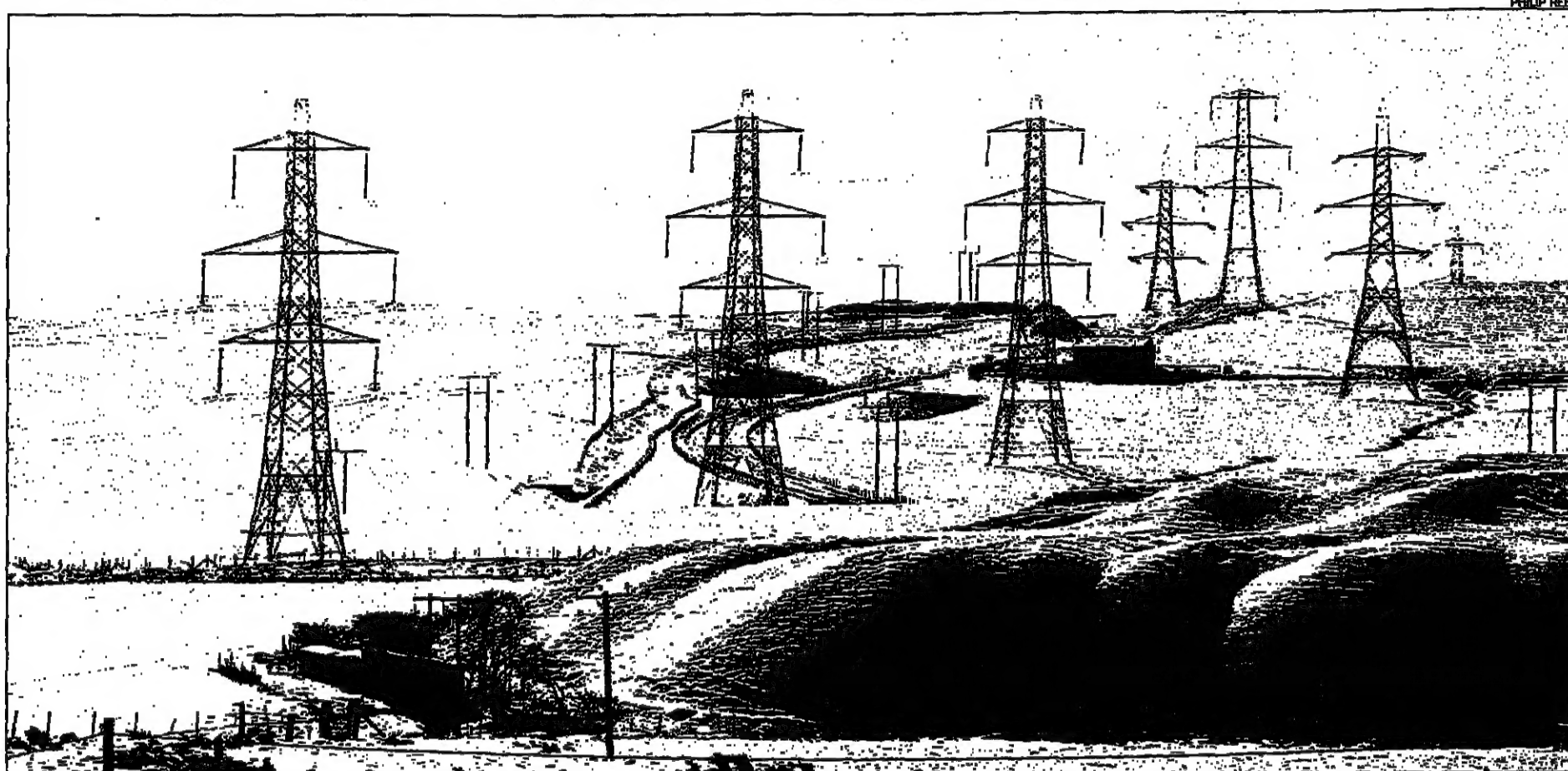
were pulled alive from chalets that were engulfed by nine feet of snow, but five people were still missing.

A British company, Ski Weekend, which uses the resort, renowned for its easy runs, said that its clients were safe. "Everything is destroyed. My lounge is gone," one villager told French radio. "All villagers are shovelling snow. There are bits of timber and beams. We don't know if we are walking over buried people."

Thousands of British holidaymakers were among those stranded in resorts throughout the region. At least five Britons have died in the Alps in recent days — the latest was named as John Dean, 37, from West Norwood, South London, who lost control while skiing in Meribel and fell into a deep drift. Police said he suffocated before friends could free him.

Skiers have been told to keep to official pistes, with dire warnings that straying into unauthorised areas was "a life-threatening activity".

Another avalanche cut off the railway line to Switzerland near Chamonix and



Snow blanketed the mountainside near Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales yesterday as the cold spell continued to wreak havoc. Warmer weather should arrive by the weekend

snow blocked access to the Mont Blanc tunnel between Chamonix and Italy. Further north, snow derailed the engine of the Paris-to-Venice train in the region of Besançon.

In western Austria, about 3,000 tourists were stranded for the fourth day running in ski resorts cut off by up to 40cm of snow, the heaviest falls for decades.

Another 3,000 people were caught in Tyrolean resorts that had to be closed yesterday because of fears of avalanches.

Markus Graf, a spokesman for the tourist authority in the resort of Ischgl, where 1,500 holidaymakers remained trapped, said: "At first it was all quite a laugh when we thought the situation would ease off quite quickly. But people have had to get used to the fact that they're going to have to stay here longer and the atmosphere is getting tense."

On Sunday, an 18-year-old snowboarder died in the Ty-

rolean resort of St Johann after he skidded into a river and froze.

Yesterday, the Swiss authorities closed the country's biggest airport in Zurich and shut down roads amid fears of avalanches. On Sunday, two people died when a slab of snow ripped the top floor off a café in the Alpine resort of Wengen, near the town of Interlaken.

In Sweden, temperatures fell to -12C. In Belgium, the army was called out to clear

the motorway to Luxembourg.

In Britain icy conditions caused a bus crash, near Petworth, West Sussex, which left 18 pupils from Herbert Shiner secondary school needing hospital treatment. The worst hit areas of the country were the North East and Scotland where heavy snow falls up to 20cm deep caused chaos on the roads.

Up to 6cm of snow lay over parts of north and east Norfolk, including Norwich. East

Yorkshire, the North York Moors, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and parts of the South East also had some snow.

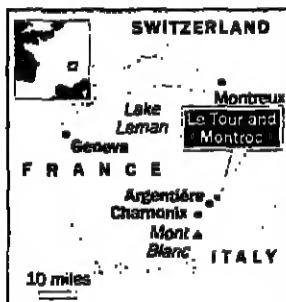
Thousands of children enjoyed an extra day off school after heavy snowfalls forced more than 100 schools in the northeast of Scotland to close. A total of 13,500 pupils in Aberdeenshire could not make it to schools as snow caused problems throughout Britain.

Lothian and Borders Police continued to investigate the

death of Yvonne Davidson, 34, a mother of three, who died on Monday after slipping on an icy pavement in Broxburn, West Lothian.

The AA dealt with 18,000 breakdowns and put on 50 extra patrols. Forecasters predicted no immediate respite from the cold but there was a hint of a thaw, especially in northern areas, with a warm Atlantic front approaching by the weekend.

Forecast, page 20



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The worst not be over meningitis

Better vaccine is on the way

The worst may not be over for meningitis town

After three deaths, a pupil is critically ill and parents blame official delay, reports Simon de Bruxelles

DOCTORS will not know for nearly a week whether they have contained an outbreak of meningococcal meningitis that has killed three people in one small town.

More than 1,700 pupils and staff at three schools in Pontypridd, South Wales, were vaccinated against the disease yesterday. Seven children are in hospital, bringing the total of cases in the area to 11.

Stuart Mottram, 16, was last night described as "very critically ill". He was a pupil at the same school as Gareth Gould, 15, who died last week. Stuart's parents were praying at his bedside in the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff.

A child aged 11 was described as "critical but improving". Despite the mass vaccination and the distribution of antibiotics to everyone who had been in close contact with the sick, the doctor in charge of the public health operation gave a warning that it was too early to say if the outbreak was over.

Meirion Evans, a specialist in communicable diseases with Bro Taf Health Authority, said: "We have had no cases in school pupils since Saturday, but we still have a number of days before the incubation period has run its course."

He defended the health authority's decision not to issue antibiotics to children after Gareth's death a week last Sunday. National guidelines advise mass treatment only after more than one case.

Many parents, including those of Lisa Peart, 15, who is recovering at the East Glamorgan General Hospital, said

that the authorities could have prevented the illness spreading if they had acted sooner.

On Monday evening, after the declaration of a public health emergency, 38 children were taken to the hospital in Pontypridd. A further 20 had been taken in by lunchtime yesterday. All were allowed home after examination.

On a cold, bright morning, 1,000 pupils from Coedy-Lan Comprehensive School filed in for their injections. Some were brought by parents while others arrived in a convoy of white school buses, nervously aware that the disease is believed to be spread by close contact in confined spaces. Subdued and apprehensive, few stayed to talk to school friends. Many had not been to school since Gareth died with-in hours of being taken ill.

Similar scenes were evident at the comprehensive's lower school in the centre of town and at Treobart Primary, each of which has had two pupils fall ill with the disease. All were relieved that the governors had decided to close the schools until after the half-term holiday next week. Few believed the reassurance of the health authority that the chances of contracting the infection at school were tiny.

Richard Male, 16, said: "If they hadn't closed [Coedy-Lan], no one would have come in anyway. My parents have kept me off since last week. I've had several people in Ponty ask where I go to school. Some of them are just curious, but others look nervous."

The school is on the site of the former Albion Colliery,

scene of one of Britain's worst mining disasters. In July 1894, 290 men and boys were killed, most of them from the same tiny hillside community above the town where several of the meningitis victims live.

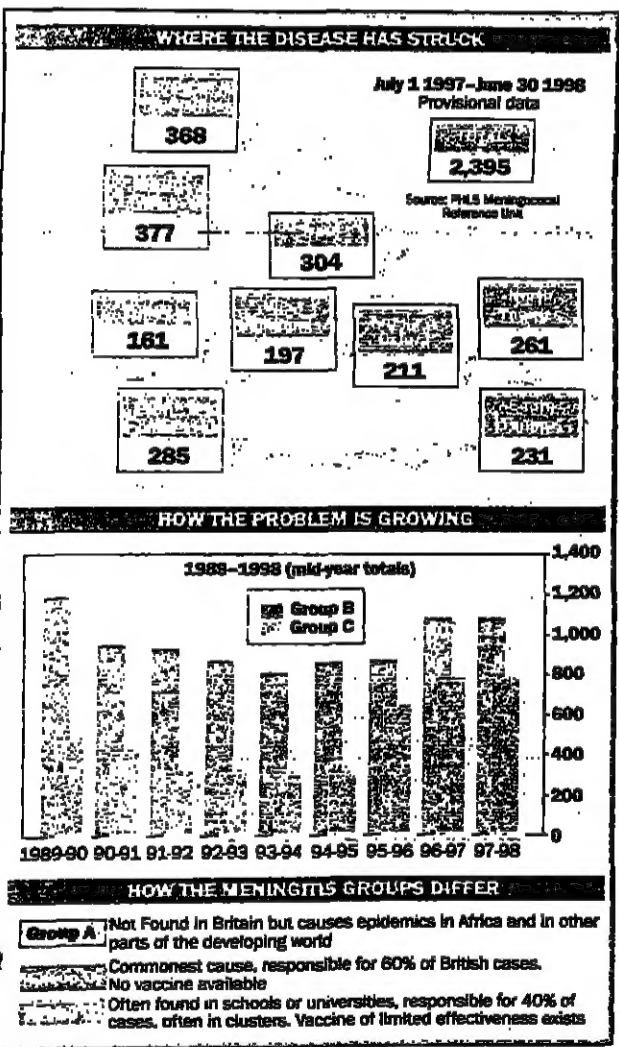
Doctors believe that there is no direct connection between the outbreak in the three schools and two other recent deaths in Pontypridd. Lynne James, the head of domestic education at the Roman Catholic Cardinal Newman School, died on Sunday night. A pensioner in her sixties died in the town last month.

Jon Owen Jones, the Welsh Health Minister, told the Commons yesterday that extra vaccines and antibiotics had been brought in from Bristol and the West Midlands.



Children at Coedy-Lan Comprehensive School after receiving vaccinations yesterday. A fellow pupil has died and another is in intensive care

What gives Claudia Schiffer confidence?



Better vaccine is on the way

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE form of meningitis responsible for the cases in Pontypridd has become much more common in recent years. Group C meningitis — caused by a particular form of the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis* — is particularly common in teenagers and seems prone to causing clusters of cases.

It reached Britain in the early 1990s, probably from Canada, where it had caused outbreaks similar to the one in Pontypridd. In vulnerable people it can cause extremely rapid development of symptoms, and death.

"Some will get very ill very quickly, but in others it is not so life-threatening," according to Julia Warren, of the Meningitis Research Foundation. "We don't know why it affects some people one way and others quite differently."

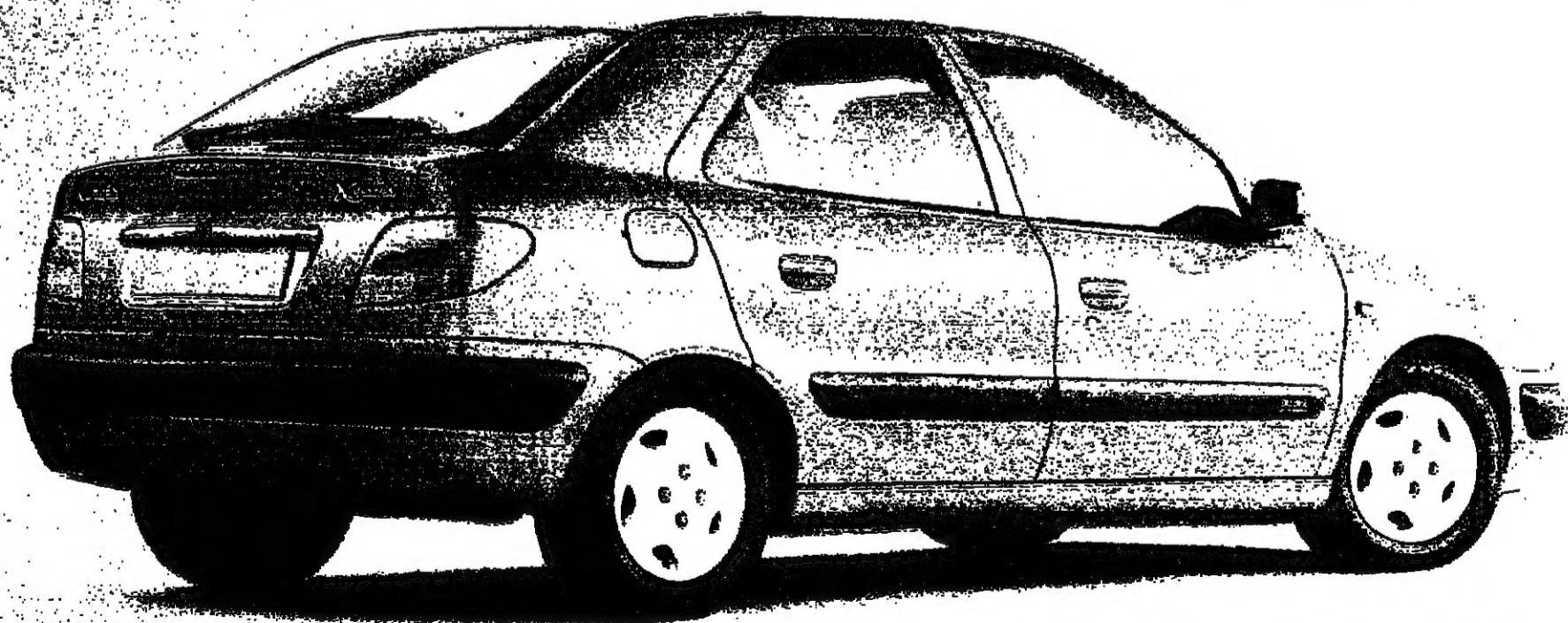
Not is it known why people in their late teens or early twenties are so vulnerable. Babies are at greatest risk, because their immune systems have yet to develop fully, but the next highest incidence is in those aged 15 to 19.

A research project at the Institute of Child Health in London aims to discover why this group is so vulnerable. Suspicion rests on the changes in lifestyle they experience as students: a wider social life, smoking, drinking, new relationships and possibly also the stress of exams and being away from home are all seen as possible factors.

A vaccine against Group C meningitis does exist, but it is not very effective. It does not work when given to babies under two, and provides only a few years' protection. That is why it is only used to protect populations at high risk during an outbreak. A better vaccine is on the way, as the result of work by the Public Health Laboratory Service and other British organisations.

Early results are said to be "very encouraging", but are incomplete. The vaccine will not be ready until 2001 or 2002. Trials are being delayed by the reluctance of mothers to volunteer their children.

Meningococcal bacteria are far from rare. The risk is not of being infected with the bacterium, but of being one of those who proves vulnerable.



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Woodhead hails big improvement in teaching standards

But gap between good and bad remains too wide, writes John O'Leary

STATE schools have achieved a big improvement in standards, despite there still being up to 15,000 incompetent teachers in English classrooms, the Chief Inspector of Schools reported yesterday.

Chris Woodhead, in his annual report as head of the Ofsted inspection agency, said the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons had dropped from almost 25 per cent five years ago to 8 per cent in the past school year. He expected the proportion to fall still further in the next 12 months.

Mr Woodhead said: "Looking back over the five years, I think the state of the nation's schools is much healthier than it was." The proportion of unsatisfactory lessons had dropped by 50 per cent in a single year, despite targeting poor secondary schools for a new round of reinspections.

Partly as a result of the agency's scrutiny, behaviour and attendance had picked up, as had standards of teaching and learning, Mr Woodhead said. "The Ofsted trigger to improvement has led to a situation where more children are getting a decent education than would have been the case if it hadn't existed."

However, state education remained a "lottery" for children, with an unacceptably wide gap between good and bad schools, he said. Examination results had yet to reflect the improvement in teaching.

Mr Woodhead added that

GETTING BETTER ALL THE TIME

Ofsted's most improved schools are: Barking Abbey Comprehensive School, Barking; Eltham School, Eltham; Baverstock GM School, Kings Heath, Birmingham; St Thomas Aquinas RC School, Kings Norton, Birmingham; Beeston School, Blackburn; Malbank School, Northwich, Cheshire; Breckfield Community School, Breckfield, Peterborough; St Alden's County High School, Catterick, North Yorkshire; Benington Comprehensive School, Bishop Auckland; Villiers High School, Southall; The Bishop Bell C of E School, Eastbourne; Hurlingham and Chelsea School, London SW6; Harrow High School, Harrow; Christ Church C of E High School, Ashford, Kent; Angley School, Cranbrook, Kent; Rutland School, Kirby, Merseyside; Monksmead High School, Monksmead, Lancashire; The Hollins County High School, Apollonia, Lancashire; Alder Grange High School, Newtondale, Lancashire; The Beechcroft College, Oadby, Leicestershire; The Robert Smyth School, Market Harborough, Leicestershire; Alton High School, Walton, Liverpool; St John Bosco High School, Crossfield, Liverpool; North Manchester High School for Girls, Stratford School (GM), London E7; Southfield School, Kettering, Northants; Lady Lumley's School, Peterborough; North Yorks Wood Green School, Witley, Oxfordshire; Poole High School, Chardwell Heath School, Flintshire; Harlewell School, Shrewsbury; The City Technology College, Kingsbury, Birmingham; Whitehouse Community School, Shapton, Macclesfield; The Eastwood School, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex; The Belconn School (GM), Baines, Surrey; Chatham Grammar School for Girls, Kent; The Robert Napier School, Gillingham, Kent; Widdowdale Girls' School, Chiddingfold, Kent; Gable Harrow GM Comprehensive School, Stansted in Hope, Essex; Mayfield School, London E2; The Clarendon School, Tring, Herts.

the evidence from more than 6,000 inspections carried out in 1997-98 supported his controversial claim that 15,000 teachers were incompetent.

He acknowledged that Ofsted's concentration on poor secondary schools was likely to have inflated the figure, but said the reports would suggest that the estimate was correct. Officials believe that the decline in the number of poor lessons could be due to generally satisfactory staff teaching more consistently, leaving a rump of poor performers.

Although new procedures

are in place for sacking incompetent teachers, no figures have been released to show how extensively they have been used. Mr Woodhead said anecdotal evidence from inspectors suggested a more rigorous management style in many schools, but about 2,800 head teachers still needed to show stronger leadership.

Mr Woodhead said: "In teaching, as in any other profession, somebody who is not doing the job to the expected level must be told they are a failure and offered training to improve. If eventually they do

not make sufficient progress, they must be dismissed."

David Hart, of the National Association of Head Teachers, said the new "fast-track" dismissal procedures were well used. "The vast majority of heads and teachers are performing miracles in the drive to raise standards. There are many more good teachers than poor teachers. Removal of those who are incompetent is becoming one of the fastest growth industries in education," John Dunford, of the Secondary Heads Association, said the report painted an encouraging picture of vast progress. "If the teaching profession gets the recognition it deserves, the crisis in teacher recruitment may ease."

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, welcomed the report as a vindication of Government policies. "The quality of teaching has improved and as a result, classroom standards have risen."

The report was the most upbeat of Mr Woodhead's five-year tenure of office. "There is reason for optimism," he said. "No one now, or very few, questions the need to raise standards or takes refuge in socio-economic explanations of school failure." He said he was optimistic that the Government would meet its targets for improvement. "The full list of outstanding and improved schools can be found on the Ofsted website: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>

Hard work brings top marks

By HANNAH BETTS

THE staff at Erith School in Bexley, South London, are proud of its Ofsted mark for making particular improvement — something the head teacher attributes to solid hard work rather than any managerial miracle cures.

Toby Huford, head for ten years, is "suspicious of tales of

"superheads" turning round problem schools. "You improve a school by making steady advances across broad fronts. Our own process of regeneration has taken a decade of steady improvement."

Erith is a comprehensive with about 1,750 pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. Between its 1994 and 1998 inspections the school improved

across the board in every area of evaluation from teaching and examination results to attendance. The school is now heavily oversubscribed.

The school attributes its success to the fact that it puts the quality of its teaching above all else. In 1989 Mr Huford inherited a school dominated by in-fighting between staff and managers and has resisted the

1990s dictum that head teachers should distance themselves from the classroom.

"The school has no managers who aren't involved in teaching — myself included. The people who achieved the highest grades for their teaching were our senior management team. The credibility of their advice to staff runs incredibly high as a result."



Neil Yates, back with his children, George and Joanne, and wife, Alison. "There is nothing to forgive," she said

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A STRESSED farmworker who vanished more than six months ago apologised to his relieved wife and two young children yesterday after police reunited the family.

Neil Yates, 37, had been living in a guest house more than 200 miles from home. He said he had disappeared because of the stress of his job as harvest approached.

He said: "I didn't realise that I had caused so much trouble. All I can say is I am sorry for all the fuss I have caused. I left home because I was having trouble doing my job and with my home life."

"I didn't want to let anyone down. But in the end I did let everyone down. I wanted a few days on my own and then I couldn't come back."

His wife, Alison, 28, who

Man missing for 6 months returns

welcomed him home with a hug at their tied cottage in Flaxborough, Nottinghamshire, spoke of the discoveries that kept her hopes alive.

Although he left behind his car, wallet, credit cards, passport and keys, Mr Yates was found to have taken spare clothes. Then it was discovered that he had used his computer to check train times to Kent, where he was found. Police also discovered that, on the morning he disappeared, he had withdrawn £3,000 from a savings account his wife did not know existed.

Mrs Yates, mother of

George, three, and Joanne, one, said: "I always knew there was no other woman involved. He was in the field all day and never met anyone, so I knew there was nothing suspicious. I always knew he would come back and I left everything just as it was, even his toothbrush in the bathroom. As far as I'm concerned, there is nothing to forgive." She added: "It's been hard coping on my own. I had to go on income support, but I always knew it wouldn't be for ever."

Her husband, who was found after a tip-off at a hos-

tel in Folkestone, disappeared after failing to arrive at a friend's wedding in Somerset last July. Promising to join his wife after she had travelled ahead, his last words in a telephone call were: "I love you."

Mrs Yates added: "I couldn't face going to the wedding because of the problems at work. It was a social event and I couldn't handle it. 'I just want to say that my ex-employer, John Hawthorne, is a friend and he wasn't to blame for what happened.'"

"I felt dreadful about leaving the children. I now plan to go for counselling and I want to get out of farming. My advice to people suffering from stress is to talk to others and tell them how you feel, rather than go away as I did."

Iris Murdoch's funeral plea

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

IRIS MURDOCH had explicitly requested that there be no funeral or memorial service held in her honour, her literary agent said yesterday.

Ed Victor, her friend and agent of 15 years, said that his office had been inundated with calls from readers wanting to take part in some form of commemoration for the writer, but he had urged them to reread one of her novels instead.

One option open to those wanting a minimum of fuss after their death is to have an unattended cremation with no service or ceremony. Alison Samuel, the publish-

ing director of Chatto and Windus, Murdoch's publisher, said that the author's wish to avoid a fuss being made of her demonstrated her modesty: "She never sought publicity. She'd come in with her typed scripts, quietly, with no fanfare."

Mrs Samuel said that Murdoch's death, however, was still likely to boost the sales of her books. "That's the awful thing about life and death. It takes someone to die for people to recognise their literary worth. Iris Murdoch has always been recognised as one of the great writers of this century, but people forget from time to time."

Murdoch, who died on Monday after a

long period of suffering from Alzheimer's disease, asked Mr Victor several years ago to be her literary executor. He said yesterday that he did not believe there were any unpublished book manuscripts. "If Iris herself didn't want a novel published, there is no reason it should be published now," he said. "She left behind a tremendous legacy. I've always been disappointed that she was never given a Nobel."

However, Mr Victor said that Murdoch may have left a vast archive of letters, as she "spent hours writing an immense correspondence". Instead of simply signing a contract, he said, she would return it with the most "charming note".

Doctors clash over checks on failures

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A GROUP of senior doctors is in revolt against plans by the leadership of General Medical Council to bring in a centralised checking system to ensure that all doctors are fit to practise.

The plans, aimed at restoring public confidence in the profession after recent well-publicised failures, were expected to be rubber-stamped by the 104 council members meeting today. However, Edwin Borman, a consultant anaesthetist at Walsgrave Hospital in Coventry, has circulated all other council members with a plan for a local system which he says is cheaper, more efficient and less bureaucratic.

"I have already had very widespread support and interest in my ideas from members and the debate in council will be very lively and even," he said. "We have never had the chance to debate the GMC's plan properly and people think it is being imposed on them without being properly thought through."

Public and Government confidence in the profession has been dented by failures at the Bristol heart-surgery unit and the negligence of Rodney Ledward, the Kent gynaecologist whose operations injured scores of women. The GMC is aware that, if it fails, the Government is ready to scrap the system that allows the profession to police itself.

With time running out, Sir Donald Irvine, the GMC president, has decided that the

best way is to ensure every doctor is subject to external peer review every five years. Those whose work is sub-standard would be removed from the register if they cannot be helped to improve.

Dr Borman wants to see constant vetting of each doctor and department by a local standards committee. Whistleblowers would be able to ask for a spot check from the Government's new Commission on Health Improvements, with failing doctors referred to the GMC for discipline as a last resort.

The president agrees that local assessment is important but insists that to command confidence a regular external review is essential. He will tell the GMC that it will take another two years before a pilot scheme can be started along these lines and that it will be possible to introduce the system only gradually to cover each branch of the profession.

"The system would probably need primary legislation and considerable resources. The Royal College of Physicians, which brought out its own performance rules last week, says that this kind of peer review will necessitate the creation of more consultants."

Dr Borman, a former chairman of the BMA's junior doctors committee, says that a locally centred system makes it possible to identify doctors with problems at an earlier stage and would also make allowances for the environment in which staff were working.



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Landmine ban is defied on border

FROM JAMES PETTIFER IN PRIZREN

ERB military engineers in Kosovo are laying tens of thousands of internationally outlawed anti-personnel landmines along key corridors on the Albanian border in a desperate attempt to stop the flow of weapons and ammunition reaching Kosovo Liberation Army units.

The minefields are in the hills near Gorozup, above the river Drina valley, 18 miles west of here and east of the CIA strongholds in the Troj region of Albania, near the border with Montenegro. A team of experts from the international Committee of the Red Cross is compiling a report on the situation to be sent to Western Governments. A Red Cross spokesman in Geneva said yesterday: "Reports coming in from our Kosovo delegation concern us a great deal."

Yugoslavia is one of the largest manufacturers among the 25 countries that still make mines. The December 1997 Ottawa accord bans their use, and Yugoslavia is among the 123 signatories to

'Yugoslavia is one of the largest manufacturers among countries making mines'

the agreement. But in Kosovo seven different types of sophisticated anti-personnel mines have been found by munitions experts attached to the Kosovo Verification Mission run by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In accordance with an October 1998 agreement on Kosovo, Yugoslavia is allowed to maintain a three-mile no-go zone along its border. Privately, OSCE monitors say that it is far wider in some places.

In theory Serb Army escorts ensure the safety of all border visits by monitors. In practice this allows the Serbs to lay huge minefields. "We have to work with them on that basis," one former British Army officer said.

Serb military sources see mines as a regrettable necessity, given the inaccessibility of the boundary between Albania and Montenegro.

For now, the hostilities have been brought to a standstill by the worst winter in ten years and the hope that the Paris peace negotiations will prove fruitful. But, whatever the outcome at Rambouillet, the menace of the minefields will remain.

Serb role vital for Kosovo peace, says Cook

FROM TOM WALKER IN RAMBOUILLET

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, dashed the hopes of Albanian delegates at the Kosovo peace conference yesterday by telling them face-to-face that Nato troops would not enter the province until an agreement was reached that included Belgrade.

"There is no question of Nato putting troops on the ground unless there is a political settlement," he said, after visiting the Chateau Rambouillet with his French counterpart, Hubert Vedrine.

Mr Cook said that within a few days the conference could be "three-quarters of the way there," but added that the thorniest issues of a new police force and reduced Yugoslav army presence posed the final, and much higher, negotiating hurdle.

Mr Cook denied he had flown in earlier than expected because of any crisis in the talks, and insisted he had been pleasantly surprised by the progress made. He said Rambouillet could still turn the contested province into a "democratic, self-governing Kosovo, free from repression and bloodshed".

Throughout his media interviews he referred to the province by its Albanian "Kosova" title and not the Yugoslav "Kosovo," and he again warned the Belgrade regime of Slobodan Milosevic that it was caught in a "conflict that it cannot win that is keeping them isolated from the world community." Serb sources had earlier confirmed that for the first time, detailed reports from Rambouillet were being fed back to Mr Milosevic's office in Belgrade by a secure computer link set up in the Yugoslav Embassy in Paris. They hinted that while the Serbian Government was still implacably opposed to a Nato intervention force, it could look favourably upon a United Nations-led peacekeeping effort.

Mr Cook said he was sure Mr Milosevic was being kept informed, and said that his absence did not diminish the conference in any way. Neither was he bothered, he said, by persistent rumours from the chateau that the Serbs and Albanians never shared the same room, and scarcely even greeted one another. "If they don't come together until the final agreement that's fine by us," he said.

Earlier, the three international mediators in the talks emerged from the chateau. They claimed unanimity of purpose, although the Russian envoy, Boris Maïorski, hinted at problems to come for the West and Nato with his denunciation of Albanian demands for immediate intervention and his support for the cherished Serb principle of the inviolability of Yugoslavia's borders.

"We are firm believers in a political settlement, and only a political settlement, to the crisis," said the Russian, who also refused to be drawn on the security and defence issues that are likely to put Russia at odds with its Contact Group partners. "If you put the cart before the horse everyone moves, but it is very uncomfortable," he said obliquely.

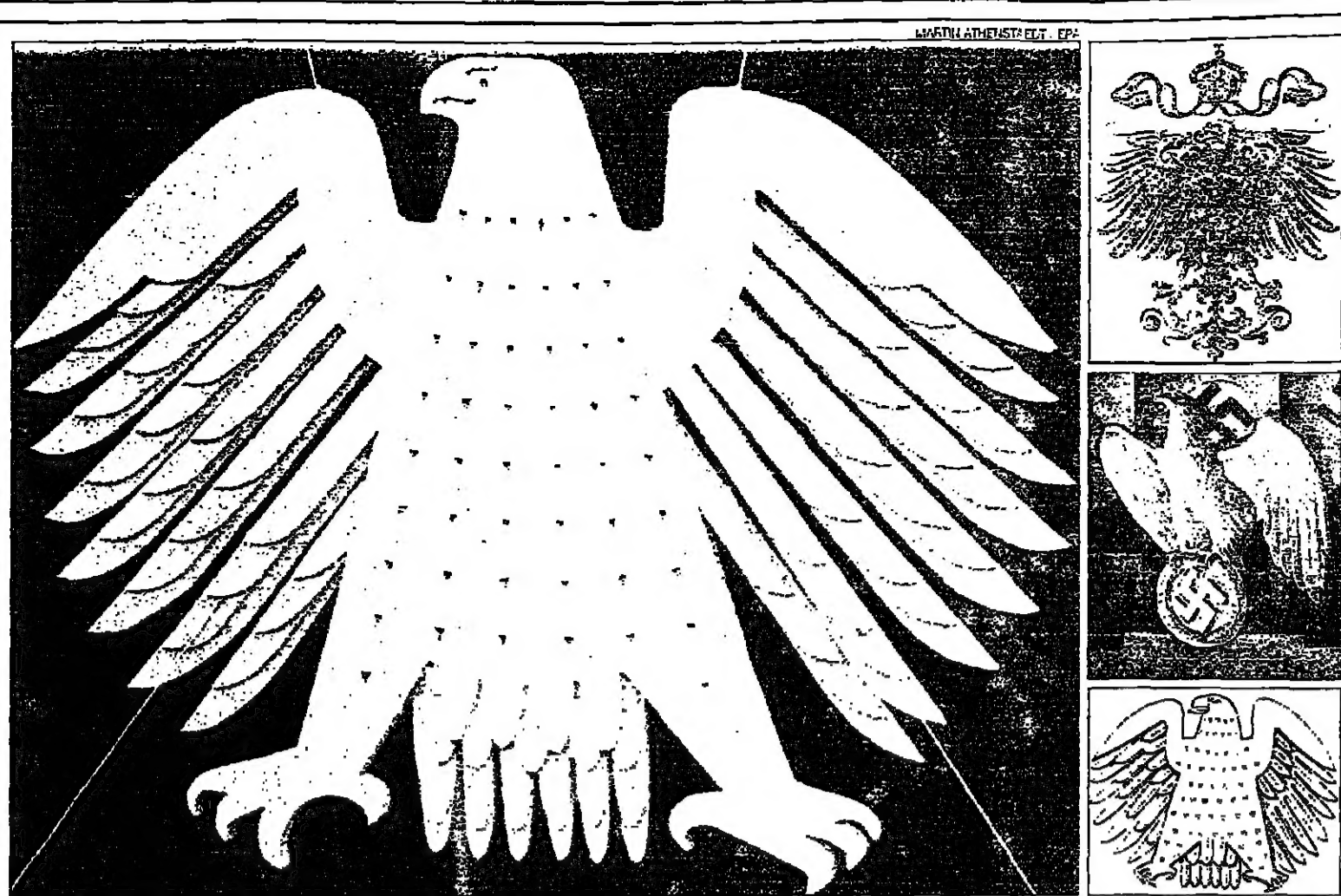
Christopher Hill, the American mediator, urged both sides to stop spinning their negotiating positions. Deciding instead how a parliament, ombudsman and new constitution could work over the next three years could give those living in Kosovo a comfortable life, he said. "We are telling them to eat their vegetables first and then by the end we will have a settlement that works."

He said Rambouillet was an attempt to clear up a mess left by the disintegration of the Ottoman empire.

Letters, Page 17



Boris Maïorski, left, the Russian envoy, and Christopher Hill, the US mediator, yesterday



Sir Norman Foster's modern eagle and, from top right, the black eagle of 1890; the swastika emblem of 1937, and the silver and gold of 1950

Germans give fat symbol the bird

Roger Boyes reports on Germany's new confident, but not over-assertive image

THE eagles, to coin a phrase, have landed. After years of debate, Germany has settled on the shape of the bird that will serve as its national symbol.

There are in fact two eagles. One has been designed by Sir Norman Foster and will hover behind the Speaker's platform in his widely admired recasting of the Reichstag in Berlin. It is a slimmed down version of the "fat hen" — the overfed bird that has dominated the parliamentary chamber in Bonn since 1952.

The second eagle is the emblem that will be portrayed on government letterheads, outside ministries and in all the usual political hunting grounds. This one has been designed by an Iraqi-born graphic artist, Rayan Abdullah. It is slightly more virile than Sir Norman's.

Both men have made extraordinary efforts to find a bird that is reassuring but not feeble: self-confident without being over-assertive. This, it is generally agreed, should be the new image of Germany as it moves its capital to Berlin this year. Fat eagles, like fat leaders, are out.

The new eagle has to look as if it is capable of flying. Herr Abdullah, who works for the Berlin agency MetaDesign, fed the post-war eagle into his

computer and found 14 weak points: the tongue was too thick, its back was hunched, the feathers manicured, and the talons too long. Like Sir Norman, he worked his way through dozens of ornithological works and books on heraldry.

He bought a season ticket to Berlin Zoo. Over the months he gathered 3,000 individual eagle portraits. The eagle is the most popular heraldic symbol after the lion. The Roman eagle was taken over by Emperor Charlemagne and thus passed on to German heraldry.

The bird always adapted to the times. Sometimes it carried a sword, sometimes a shield; sometimes it wore an imperial crown. The Reichsadler of newly-united Germany in 1871 looked ready for a scrap. By 1900 the eagle was wearing a steel helmet. The Weimar Republic eagle was proud and muscular. The Nazi eagle naturally clutched a swastika.

Herr Abdullah's new eagle is not only slimmer than the 1950s version, it is also more cerebral. He has been given

a bigger head and the muscles have been reduced. It is a thinking eagle more than one that shows strength.

The talons are open, like a fielder waiting for a cricket ball, and the feathers are allowed to grow freely rather than being subject to a military crop. It is an eagle, most observers seem to agree, that one could take home to show one's mother, almost domesticated, with just a hint of raffishness.

Herr Abdullah seems to have had an easier time with his eagle than Sir Norman. Advised that the Reichstag eagle would have to undergo a makeover, Sir Norman says he spent much time "living the world of eagles, studying them, reading about them and trying to learn as much about them as possible."

He found that German heraldic eagles resembled crows, swans or doves and he decided he would give the eagle back its identity. Above all, it should look ready for take-off, resembling the Reichstag in being a "phoenix reborn and rising from the ashes".

The architect — whose great (histor-

ically sensitive innovation is to build a glass dome on the Reichstag and thus fill it with light — presented his ideas at meeting after meeting to broad political approval.

The eagle will hover and be seen from two sides inside the chamber. But it is not easy to adapt national symbols, especially such a highly visible one. First, left and rightwingers began to disagree.

Conservatives wanted more beak and sharper talons, and leftwingers wanted a friendly eagle, a kind of avian version of Flipper the dolphin.

And then the heirs of Ludwig Gries, the designer of the original "fat hen", argued that his bird was subject to copyright. No one should fiddle around with it.

When the Reichstag houses the first session of the modern German parliament in April, Sir Norman's final version will at last be on public view: a modest adjustment of the fat hen, with thinner neck and body.

Cynics say this fairly represents the transition from Helmut Kohl, the previous Chancellor, to his successor, Gerhard Schröder — a bird that still looks its dinner but is willing to forgo second helpings — a pragmatic weight-watching kind of eagle.

Britain in clash over Hong Kong law

FROM JILL MCGIVERING IN HONG KONG

BRITAIN yesterday entered a row about Hong Kong's legal autonomy that is fast becoming the territory's worst constitutional crisis since the handover from Britain to China 19 months ago. London said that any move to restrict the powers of Hong Kong's highest court after a landmark ruling would be of serious concern.

The British Consulate said in a statement that a ruling by the Court of Final Appeal last month giving mainland children born to Hong Kong residents right of abode was a "reaffirmation of Hong Kong's autonomy in judicial matters". It said the ruling had bolstered international confidence in the "one country, two systems" concept that guaranteed Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy from China after the 1997 handover.

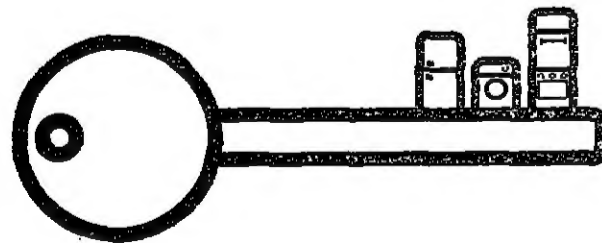
"Any move to restrict the independent judicial power of the Court of Final Appeal would be a matter of serious concern to us," it said. But the ruling, which could benefit hundreds of thousands of children, has come under fierce attack from China. A group of prominent legal experts on the mainland were quoted by China's state news agency as criticising it. They accused the ruling of violating the Basic Law and posing a challenge to the National People's Congress, the nominal Chinese parliament.

Now Zhao Ziyang, a senior mainland official, has told reporters that the ruling breached the Basic Law and should be changed. His words increased fears that Beijing might overturn the ruling, a move that would seriously undermine confidence in the rule of law here.

Martin Lee, the chairman of the Hong Kong Democratic Party, has described the controversy as an atomic bomb.

Beijing has so far been cautious. The Foreign Ministry said yesterday that the legal experts should be taken seriously, but added that support for the "one country, two systems" concept remained unchanged.

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Three named in Salt Lake City scandal

FROM GILES WHITTILL
IN LOS ANGELES

THREE top Salt Lake City Olympic officials were identified yesterday as linchpins in the corruption scandal that has clouded the future of the 2002 Winter Games and the entire Olympic movement.

The scandal could lead to prison terms for those accused of giving six-figure cash bribes and other perks in return for International Olympic Committee members' votes.

Tom Welch, Dave Johnson and Craig Peterson, all former members of the bids committee that secured the Games for the Utah capital, have been accused in a report of deceiving fellow committee members and making hidden payments to IOC members in their headlong rush for votes in 1993. The payments are thought to have totalled \$800,000 (£488,000).

The names were released yesterday with the publication of a report by the Salt Lake Organising Committee's internal ethics investigation, one of five inquiries under way into the corruption charges. It suggests that by acting behind the backs of their fellow Salt Lake "boosters", Mr Welch and Mr Johnson protected others from exposure to the corruption. But the document was swiftly criticised as flawed because all three men refused to cooperate with the investigators on their lawyers' advice.

Mr Welch and Mr Johnson have resigned from the organising committee and Mr Peterson, allegedly a key player in arranging the illicit payments, was forced off the committee in 1996. But all three may still be targets of one of the other investigations now in progress, which is by the FBI on behalf of the US Justice Department and could bring trials, fines and jail terms for anyone con-



victed. Mike Leavitt, Utah's Republican Governor, has acknowledged that the report is incomplete, but when asked at a press conference last week about the trio's alleged wrongdoing he insisted: "They had to hide it because I didn't see it and I don't know at this point of anyone else who did."

But the scope of the scrutiny of Salt Lake City officials is expanding by the day, and both Governor Leavitt and the city's Democratic Mayor, Deedee Corradini, are among those struggling to prevent their own reputations being tarnished.

The report says Mr Welch and Mr Johnson were acting alone. "But it's going to be hard to say that no one had any idea what was going on," Stephen Pace, a leading critic of the Utah Games, said. Since the scandal broke in Novem-

ber, six IOC members have been forced to resign, three have done so of their own accord, three remain under investigation and one has died.

As public attention switches back to Salt Lake City from the Olympic headquarters in Lausanne, Utah is scrambling to save the Games it fought for over a generation.

The remaining members of the organising committee are counting on Juan Antonio Samaranch, the beleaguered IOC President, to help them to raise more than \$250 million, still needed to fund the Games, which more than 70 per cent of Utah voters do not want to pay for out of taxes.

The organising committee is also looking for a new leader since the resignation of its last one, Frank Jochik. The leading candidate is Mike Romney, a venture capitalist.

Should he get the job, Mr Romney will find himself in charge of a demoralised team. Despite the findings of the organising committee's internal inquiry, Mr Welch has said other committee members did know about the cash, gifts and refundable first-class air tickets given to IOC members during the bidding process.

His refusal to speak to the committee's own investigators has left former colleagues fearful that he may be holding back information with which to protect himself should the FBI select him as a target.

In addition to Mr Welch and Mr Johnson, yesterday's report named Jean-Claude Ganga of the Congo, Charles Mukora of Kenya and nearly a dozen others, who it said received unexplained payments of from \$10,000 to \$30,000. Robert Garif, the Salt Lake committee's chairman, admitted at a press conference that "many of the large disbursements lacked complete documentation".



Welch faces charge of deceiving members



President Clinton prepares to board his helicopter for Washington yesterday as claims began to circulate about a secret voice recording system in the Oval Office

Monica tape claim raises Nixon spectre

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE Senate began its final deliberations in the impeachment trial last night amid extraordinary echoes of the Watergate scandal as Republican leaders said that they had been told President Clinton might have an Oval Office taping system similar to that which brought down Richard Nixon.

Trent Lott, the Senate Majority Leader, said that he had passed on the unsubstantiated information to Mr Clinton's nemesis, the independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr. "All I have done is make available information sent to me," said Mr Lott.

The White House denied such a recording system existed, but the idea that Mr Clinton's conversations with Monica Lewinsky could have been captured on tape electrified Washington.

The news came as one of Mr Clinton's most faithful servants was further mired in controversy. What Sidney Blumenthal, the White House aide, said about Ms Lewinsky to Christopher Hitchens, a British journalist, over lunch may become the focus of a new investigation amid allega-

tions that he was part of a presidential campaign to intimidate the former White House trainee and that he is guilty of perjury.

An affidavit by Mr Hitchens's wife, Carol Blue, who was also at the lunch, confirms her husband's claim that Mr Blumenthal described Ms Lewinsky as "a stalker".

Mr Blumenthal said in his deposition under oath last week that Mr Clinton had told him, when the scandal broke, that Ms Lewinsky was a stalker and he had rejected her demands for sex. Mr Blumenthal testified: "I didn't mention it to my friends... I certainly never mentioned it to any reporter." In a statement this week, however, he said that he talked about the Lewinsky affair to friends and family. Mr Hitchens is an old friend of Mr Blumenthal.

Meanwhile, it was clear that 67 senators will not vote to convict Mr Clinton and remove him from office, but it was uncertain whether he would be censured. Republicans who believe such a motion is too weak plan to throw procedural hurdles in its way.

Remains of singer may be exhumed

Nashville: The medical examiner here said that he will consider exhuming the body of Tammy Wynette for a post-mortem examination — almost a year after her doctor declared she died of a blood clot. The country music star, 55, was found dead at her home by her husband, George Richey. Wynette's daughters, concerned about medications she may have been taking, made the request. (Reuters)

Stamp stubs out artist's bad habit

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

A CHAIN smoker in life, Jackson Pollock is being helped to give up the habit after death by the United States Postal Service.

A new 33-cent stamp uses an artist's impression of a 1949 photograph that appeared in *Life* magazine depicting the denim-clad artist crouched over a canvas puffing away.

But on the stamp, unveiled this week to commemorate the New York artist's contribution to Abstract Expressionism, the cigarette has become the latest victim of an anti-smoking drive. Don Smeraldi, a Postal

Service spokesman, tried to explain. "We are not honouring a smoker who happened to be an artist; we're honouring a very good artist who happened to be a smoker," he said.

But others are less happy. Helen Harrison, of the Pollock-Krasner Study Centre said that it was a distortion. "It's unfortunate that bad-boy Jackson can't get away with it."

Professor David Lubin, an expert on "cultural symbolism", said that it was an example of the Government trying

to sanitise American history. "It has taken the cigarette out of the photograph because it thinks it's in the public's best interest, but that is an ethically shaky position to take. Should we expunge cigarette smokers as role models?"

The photograph was taken by Martha Holmes for a *Life* magazine cover, and *Life* licensed it to the Government for use as a reference.

Pollock, who died in 1956, is only the second American artist to be depicted on one of the country's stamps. The first was Norman Rockwell.



Pollock: known to be heavy smoker of cigarettes

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		Brentwood	£108
		Cambridge	£96
		Colchester	£92
		Epping	£90
		Ipswich	£88
		Northwich	£88
		Peterborough	£78
		Stevenage	£84
		Central England	3 nights
		Aylesbury	£88
		Birmingham	£78
		Birmingham Airport	£114
		Birmingham City	£94
		Coventry	£90
		Derby/Burton	£88
		Gloucester	£92
		High Wycombe	£90
		Leicester	£78
		Lincoln	£82
		Milton Keynes	£94
		Nottingham City	£98
		Nottingham-Derby	£88
		Walsall (The Boundary)	£82
		Scotland, Ireland and Wales	3 nights
		Aberdeen	£80
		Belfast	£74
		Cardiff	£98
		Cardiff City	£96
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Queen Noor, the widow of King Hussein, receives condolences from one of thousands of mourners at Raghdan Palace in Amman yesterday

New King courts Iraq

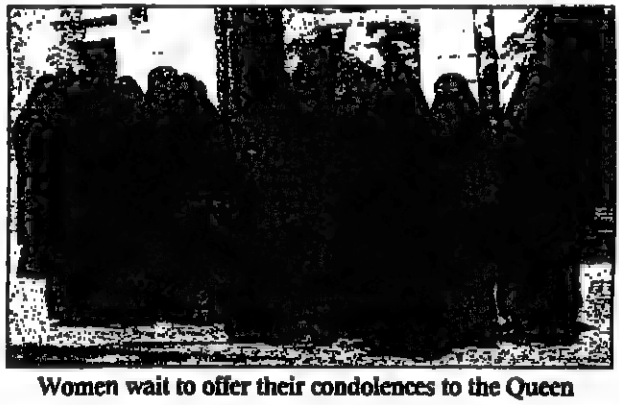
Pledge to improve bilateral ties is considered shrewd move, writes Christopher Walker in Amman

IRAQ announced yesterday that Jordan's untried new ruler, King Abdullah II, is seeking to strengthen ties with Baghdad, sending waves of apprehension through the main Western embassies in Amman, which has become the focal point for opposition to President Saddam Hussein. In the three weeks since King Hussein switched the succession and appointed the unknown Prince Abdullah, 37, as his apparent in place of his 51-year-old brother, Hassan — an outspoken critic of the Iraqi regime — America has been striving to ensure that the new ruler would keep his father's strong tilt against Baghdad, including his willingness to permit anti-Saddam groups to operate from Jordan.

While the West tried last night to assess the significance of the pledge to Baghdad, a senior Arab diplomat said: "For a new King trying to shore up support at home at a time of severe economic hardship, voicing pro-Iraqi sentiments is a very shrewd move." Before the Gulf crisis, when crippling United Nations sanctions were imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait, Baghdad was one of Jordan's main trading partners.

In the absence of strong representation in Jordan's rubber stamp, 80-member parliament, the main focus for Jordan's opposition groups is the Amman-based Committee for the Lifting of the Embargo on Iraq, which has become a vehicle for drafting a blueprint for political reform due soon to be presented to the new monarch. A spokeswoman for the group, Toujan Faisal, Jordan's first and only woman MP until she lost her seat in 1997, has a colour photograph of herself standing next to Saddam in one of his sumptuous Baghdad palaces displayed prominently in her salon. "I put it there as a message to all Jordanian politicians and officials who may visit me here to let them know that I

and tens of thousands of Jordanians like me approve of Saddam and support him against attacks by the West," said Mrs Faisal who describes herself as an independent liberal. Even before the death of King Hussein, a gradual thaw in relations between Jordan and Iraq was under way after two crises, one in 1995 and the other last year. Alongside the diplomatic manoeuvring, Jordan continued its national mourning for its late leader of 47 years yesterday with thousands of ordinary people flocking to offer their condolences to the Royal Family. The men went to one royal palace to greet King Abdullah and women to a separate one where they offered condolences to Queen Noor, the late King's American-born fourth wife, his British-born second wife Princess Muna, the mother of the new King, and his daughters and sisters. Ramat Gan, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, hinted last night that his Government could reach a peace agreement with Lebanon and Syria by the end of this year. (AFP)



Women wait to offer their condolences to the Queen

Iranian head of security resigns

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN TEHRAN

IRANIANS yesterday cautiously celebrated a victory for President Khatami when the head of the country's hardline intelligence ministry resigned a month after admitting rogue agents were responsible for the murders of several dissident intellectuals and writers. The departure of Dorri Najafabadi was seen as a sign that the moderate Mr Khatami was gaining ground in his battle to enforce the rule of law. Rarely, if ever, have the authorities here accepted responsibility for mistakes. "The mere fact that a head of a ministry has resigned in this way is a good sign," said Ibrahim Yazdi, the leader of an illegal but tolerated opposition party. "But we still want a public trial of those arrested and their names and positions should be announced."

The spate of grisly kidnappings and killings that terrorised Iran's intellectual community was seen as an attempt by hardliners to undermine support for Mr Khatami, a cleric who saw off the old guard's candidate in a presidential election nearly two years ago. Despite Mr Khatami's huge popular mandate, the hardliners maintain an iron grip on the so-called "power ministries" including that of intelligence, the pervasive apparatus that took over from the Shah's feared Savak. However, the killings, like several other attempts to undermine Mr Khatami, backfired. They provoked a huge popular outcry, including street demonstrations. The country's outspoken press immediately pointed the finger at the intelligence ministry. Then on January 5 came the announcement from the ministry itself that "renegade, irresponsible and misguided colleagues" were responsible for the murders and had been arrested. An agent confessed that his group was responsible for the deaths of 60 dissidents at home and abroad. The killings began last November when Darius Faruqi, the leader of a small opposition party, and his wife, Farvaneh, were stabbed to death in their home. Next the bodies of two writers, Mohammed Mokhtari and Mohammed Pouryandeh, were found strangled by the side of the road.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Anwar's accuser retracts testimony

Kuala Lumpur: Another of Anwar Ibrahim's accusers retracted his evidence in a sworn statement yesterday and disappeared from view after apparently escaping from police custody (David Watts writes). Ensk Mior, 32, a dress designer for Mr Anwar's wife, Azizah, said in the statement that he had been forced by police to say he had been sodomised by Mr Anwar, the former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister. He added that he had been stripped naked, tortured and made to simulate sex acts while in police custody for the past four months. Mr Mior is the third of Mr Anwar's alleged sodomy victims to renounce his evidence to the police. A fourth has made differing allegations and the whereabouts of a fifth is unknown.

Three girls die in leap

Moscow: Three girls aged 11, 12 and 14 threw themselves off the eighth floor of their block of flats here in a joint suicide. Russian television reported. Two of them, Tanja and Alina, were killed immediately; the third, Alyona, died in hospital. The close friends left a letter asking to be buried in the same coffin. Media reports said that police had ruled out drugs or unhappy love affairs and suspected involvement with a sect. The Jehovah's Witnesses had reportedly approached one of the girls. (AFP)

Tomb collapse kills four

Shanghai: A collapsed mud wall inside a 2,300-year-old imperial tomb in northern China's Shaanxi province has buried alive an archaeologist and three assistants, the Shanghai Star reported. The four were working 50ft underground on Friday when the wall fell at the site, north of Xi'an. The newspaper added that work began two years ago at the Han Dynasty tomb, which contains the remains of more than 100 government officials and is the largest of its kind yet discovered in China. (AFP)

Rebels join state outfit



Phnom Penh: The last fighters from Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrilla group have formally joined the national army, swapping Mao-style hats and drab green fatigues for smart new uniforms (Caroline Gluck writes). At a ceremony at the former Khmer Rouge stronghold of Antong Veng, General Tea Banh, above left, the ex-Defence Minister, called it a symbolic day. "This is the last of the defections, and it is a great contribution to ending more than two decades of chronic war," he said.

Lovers in death hug

Singapore: A lovers' quarrel ended when a man poured flammable liquid over his girlfriend, set her alight and then hugged her — setting himself ablaze too. Toh Chiam Hoe, 34, died 12 hours later while Kua Sui Lean, 29, whose mother and sister saw the attack from a taxi near by, remained in a critical condition with burns over 80 per cent of her body. (AFP)

"I AM SO IN LOVE WITH MY CHILD, I HAVE NO REGRETS AT ALL"



THE MOTHER OF LORD SNOWDON'S BABY TALKS FOR THE FIRST TIME ABOUT THEIR AFFAIR.

PLUS Greg Rusedski and fiancée Lucy Connor, Michael Caine, Alana Stewart, Carol Barnes and much more. All in this week's HELLO!



GOOD NEWS EVERY WEEK

In death as in life — a minimum of fuss

A quiet exit like Iris Murdoch's is the trend, says Vanora Bennett

I was typical of the modest Iris Murdoch that on her death she didn't want any fuss. No grand funeral or aggrandising memorial service. A philosopher, an intellectual, an acclaimed novelist, she had no doubt considered the manner of her passing carefully and decided that she would like to go quietly.

Of course, it would amuse Dame Iris, who died on Monday, that in choosing to depart with minimal attention, she was at the vanguard of a modern movement. If death can be minimalist — and what could be more so? — then the taste for dying without the traditional displays of pomp, piety and religious respect is gaining currency.

The playwright Robert Bolt, who died in 1995, was buried at the bottom of the garden of the 11th-century house he shared with his actress wife Sarah Miles. "He didn't want to be embalmed, wanted to be buried in the garden and wanted us all to drink champagne," she recalled afterwards.

Nicholas Albery, the editor of *The Natural Death Handbook*, has specified in his will that he wants to be buried on a piece of farmland that he and his wife were given as a wedding present. There will be no coffin; he wishes to be wrapped in a sheet and buried beneath a newly planted apple tree.

The *Natural Death Centre* has information on woodland burial sites — about 85 exist, run by farmers and local authorities, where graves costing between £300 and £800 are marked only with a tree or a simple wooden plaque — burials at sea (about 20 take place every year) and garden burials. Those prepared to meet their maker without an oak casket can choose between cardboard and papier-mâché coffins, costing between £50 and £170, woven willow alternatives (£350) or woollen burial shrouds (£124).

Even some Church of England clergymen are exploring the unconventional. The diocesan synod of Ely, in Cambridgeshire, last year approved a plan to set up its own 40-acre woodland burial site. The Rev Peter Owen Jones, one of the scheme's supporters, says: "We want to move away from the



Iris Murdoch, who died on Monday after a long battle with Alzheimer's, and her husband John Bayley

Victorian melodrama of burial."

Few legal barriers exist; no planning permission is needed for garden burials, nor advance sanction from environmental health officers. There is no blueprint for such an informal burial; relatives make their own arrangements.

But, the Centre adds, problems can arise. The Ministry of Agriculture has produced a minefield of guidelines to discourage burial at sea. A garden burial can "cause dissension if not all members of the family are in favour, or reduce

the property's value". And it is vital to remember that funerals are as much for the living as for the dead. Offering survivors the emotional comfort of a parting that they can remember without discomfort — rather than veering too far into the trendy — is a main function of a funeral.

"It should be a meaningful and fitting way to pay tribute to a life ended, so that afterwards the nearest and dearest can look back and feel they said farewell to their loved one in a sensitive and digni-

fied way," says Dominic Maguire, the president of the National Association of Funeral Directors.

For Thomas Lynch, an undertaker and the author of a study on death, worries about form, money and display are simply displacement activities to hide from grief.

"We believe we can control our feelings by laughing at undertakers — whilst past the graveyard — and paying attention to the numbers, but that's not what it's about. We have to face the fact that if you love, you grieve."

I stand, she delivers

Friday, 2.30am. Staggering under the weight of two kitbags and a backpack stuffed with tiny outfits, we arrive at St Luke's-Roosevelt hospital to have a baby. We take the lift to the 12th floor, where we are ushered into a tiny "observation" cubicle with a gurney bed, sink, bin and chair. A nurse straps monitors to Joanna to measure her contractions and the foetal heartbeat, then leaves us. The contractions are coming fast and hard and Joanna is complaining of acute back pain.

"I'm going to throw up again!" she gasps. I look around for a receptacle. I help her to the sink, patting her heaving shoulders as she hugs the cold porcelain and retches violently.

"Why you throw up in the sink?" demands the nurse crossly from the doorway.

"Where else were we supposed to do it?" I protest. "The bin," she says with a scowl.

We are not here to argue about where to vomit. Joanna has jettisoned all thoughts of using the birthing centre and having a "natural" drug-free labour. She pleads for an epidural as we wait for our obstetrician to drive in from the suburbs. She looks away as the grumpy nurse stretches a tourniquet around her arm and inserts an IV needle into a bulging vein. The needle pops out. The nurse tries again. And again. Each time the needle slips out, leaving a crimson blotch of blood on the white linen.

"Your veins — no good," the nurse complains and wanders off. She returns with a green-smocked Russian, whom I overhear scolding her for using the wrong needles. He manages first time.

Friday, 3am. In the delivery room. An elegant Chinese anaesthetist inserts a catheter into Joanna's spine and feeds in liquid numbness. Joanna almost weeps with gratitude as the pain seeps away. She is suffering from "back labour", with the baby's head in a posterior position. The doctor decides to go in with an instrument like a flattened crochet hook "to break the waters". Luckily, Joanna cannot see it.

Now she is rigged up to a web of technological tendrils: wires to the monitors and tubes to a drip that dispenses a labour-inducing drug and saline to keep her blood pressure up. One by one we are conceding to all the things we were urged to resist in birthing class, all the gadgetry and poisons of a "medicated" birth.

Friday, 1.30pm. Joanna has been pushing for two hours while I count each push, feeding her crushed ice in between, murmuring reassurances. But I get things slightly wrong. I grip her hand too hard. My lower-back massage eludes the hot spot. I am devoid of the power to appease. I am a man in the delivery room. I revert to the hunter-gatherer default and go off foraging for sustenance. When I return, bearing Starbucks coffee, I find there has been progress.

"You're so close," says the doctor. "Can you see the baby's head?" she asks me. And there is the top of our baby's head, covered in a fuzz of curly blond hair.

"It's time for an internal baby heart monitor," she adds. From her quiver of medieval torture tools she produces an instrument shaped like a long knitting

needle; she intends to screw its small metal tip into the baby's head. We meekly agree. Her first attempt fails, however; puzzled, she withdraws the applicator tube. "They've redesigned it," she complains mildly, spreading out the instructions on the foot of the bed.

"Pull tab (a), twist (b) and remove," reads Deborah, the labour nurse. "The tab goes back in after you've turned, like this," I offer, as we huddle around the applicator as though assembling Ikea furniture. Joanna groans at the onset of another contraction. I remember that we are screwing a cranial spike into a baby.

3.15pm. Joanna's strength is waning. Between contractions she uses an oxygen mask. I look out of the window. Outside it is a busy New York Friday afternoon. Below is a dotted line of yellow cabs, slow-moving termite jostling for position. On the Hudson I can see the grey hulk of the USS *Intrepid*, the aircraft carrier, berthed there. The panorama unfolds across the river to the New Jersey shore, and south through a thicket of mid-town high rises to the twin towers of the World Trade Centre. Helicopters thrub across at window height on their way to the Chelsea heliport — the world into which we are trying to entice this baby to make its reluctant debut.

I turn back. The atmosphere has changed. I follow the doctor's anxious eyes to the blinking monitors and the graphs they spew. The baby's heart rate is beginning to falter between contractions. With a magician's flourish, the doctor whips the green cloth off the trolley at her side to reveal an array of suctioning equipment. Deborah pushes a red button on the wall; suddenly the room is full of people in smocks and shower caps.

The doctor has the vacuum cap leached on to the sandy dome of the baby's head and on the next contraction she really heaves. Like an old-fashioned dentist pulling at a deep-rooted molar. But, unbelievably, the head remains lodged. All eyes swivel back to the monitors, where the vital signs blink wildly like Wall Street stock prices on a volatile trading day. "Episiotomy," she says. It is a bald statement of fact, not a subject for discussion. She snatches up a pair of scissors. The blades scintillate in the beam of the lowered spotlight. I look away. But above the beeping of the monitors and the roar of the air-conditioning, I hear two loud snips. I look back to see the doctor tossing the scissors on to the tray, and at the next contraction she takes up her grip on the handle of the vacuum, assuming a tug-of-war stance with her shoulders.

I am appalled by the violence being directed towards this unborn baby, terrified that its little neck will simply snap with the force of it all. I am about to plead for a "C" section myself when suddenly the doctor staggers back and the baby shoots out — head, arms, torso, legs — like a long, bloody link of sausages, and immediately the room is filled with the instantly recognisable cry of the newborn.

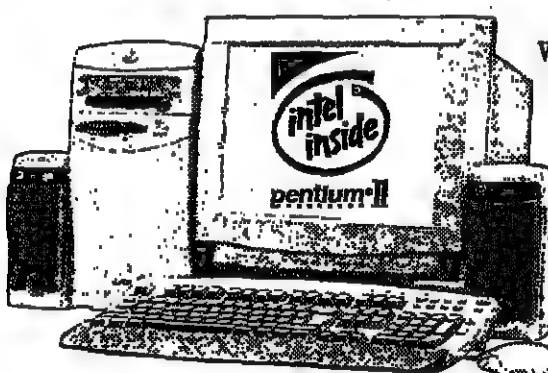
"It's a boy," says the doctor and lifts the baby, still tethered like a tiny moonwalker by his umbilical cord.

PETER GODWIN

The other half

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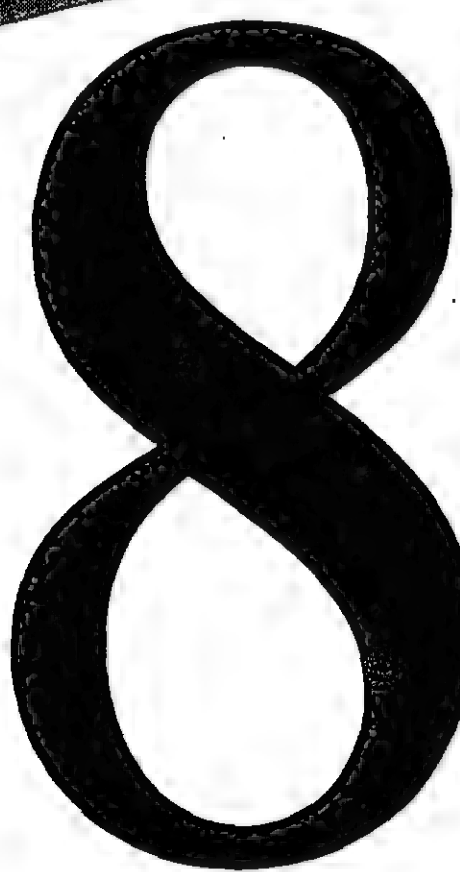
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The next big bang: explosive the size of salt grains

The creation of N_5 , an atomic freak of nature, has stunned the world of chemistry. **Nicholas Booth reports**

There are two sorts of explosion in chemistry — predictable ones and those that are entirely unexpected. To hear Karl Christe describe the events of one day last November, the explosion that destroyed part of his apparatus came as no surprise. "We knew what we were looking for," he says with a studied nonchalance. "We knew it would be very unstable and spectacular."

The "it" in question has the normally staid world of inorganic chemistry agog. For Dr Christe's research team, working for the US Air Force, has formed an atomic freak of nature and one of the most virulently explosive substances ever created.

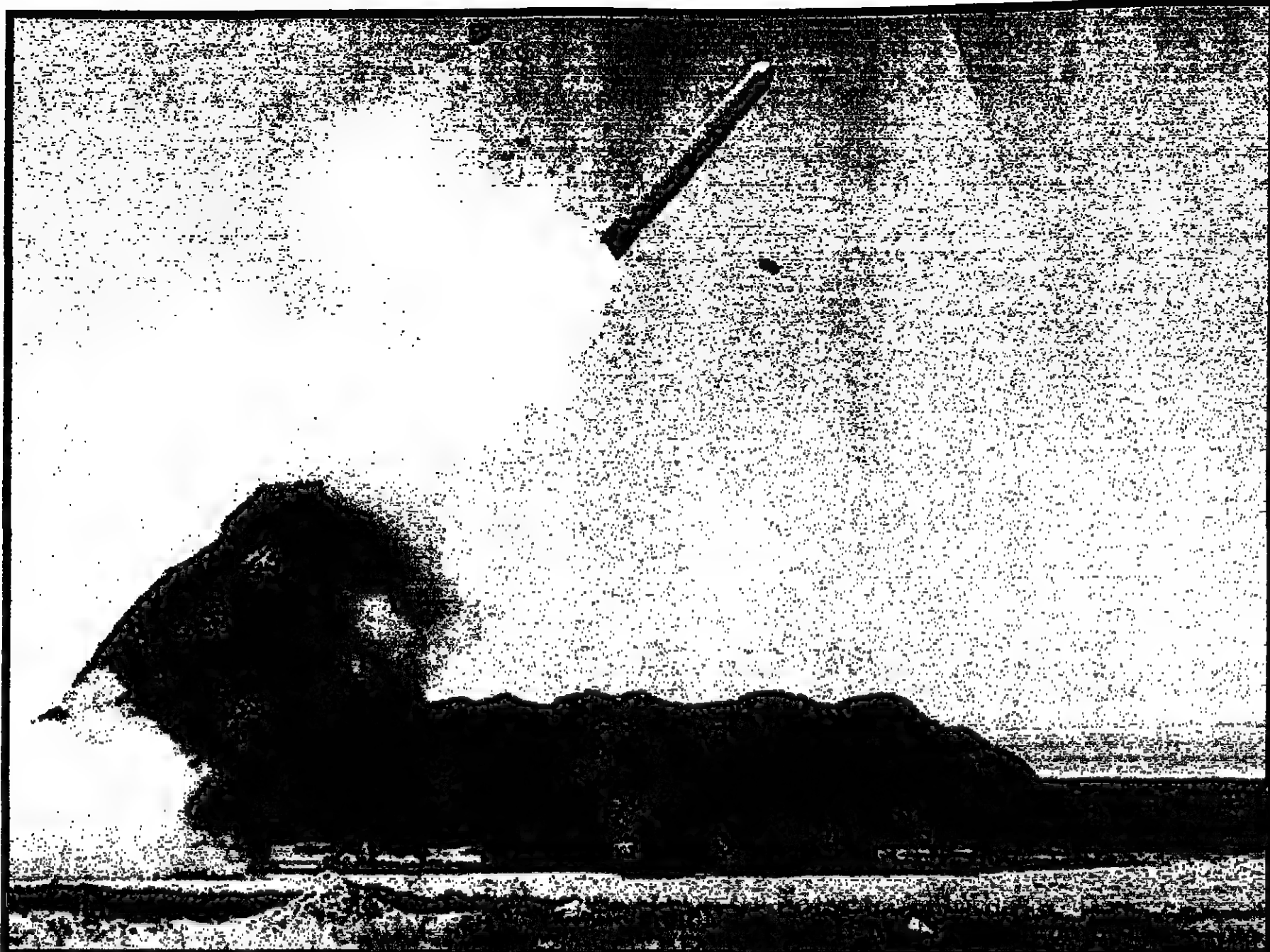
Known as "Nitrogen 5" (N_5), many chemists doubted this form of polynitrogen could ever exist, let alone be created in a laboratory. And yet when it was synthesised in the form of a few grains of salt, the effects were quite spectacular. "I was quite relieved when it blew up," Dr Christe says. "If you expect something to be that energetic, you're going to have to deliver." Although he is at pains to point out that his work is purely fundamental research, it does promise higher-to unexpected advances in rocket propellants and explosives.

Dr Christe was the leader of a team of 15 chemists, who created this man-made form of nitrogen.

Normally regarded as one of the more staid and boring of elements, nitrogen is the invisible gas that forms four fifths of our atmosphere. Gaseous nitrogen comprises two atoms joined together as N_2 , which is stable and unreactive. It was first isolated in 1772 by, among others, the British scientist Henry Cavendish. Yet its stability makes it useful as a potential explosive: when some of its electrons are stripped, the positively charged fragments (ions) will go to any lengths, even violent ones, to regain stability. A second form of nitrogen was found in the 1890s in the form of azides or N_3 , which temporarily binds three nitrogen atoms together. Azides are so unstable that they usually have to be kept in a crystalline form. The lattice structure imprisons each azide so that it cannot come into contact with its neighbour — an explosion results if contact occurs.

A common form is the sodium azide that is found inside the airbags of cars. It is used to generate nitrogen rapidly. When a car undergoes a severe impact, the nitrogen ions come into contact and release the gas remarkably quickly.

The third form created by Dr Christe is more unstable still. N_5 consists of five nitrogen atoms bonded in a V-shape. Essentially, his team have pulled a rabbit out of a hat: binding more than three



We have lift off: the newly-created substance N_5 , part an initiative by the US Air Force to look into highly energetic materials, could be used for more efficient rocket fuel

nitrogen atoms together was believed to be impossible. When Dr Christe presented his findings to the American Chemical Society last month, the audience were stunned and not because of the explosion.

Dr Christe's work is part of an initiative by the US Air Force to look into highly energetic materials, which could be used for making more efficient rocket fuel. His work is carried out at the Edwards Air Force Base, a vast dry lake in California's Mojave Desert, most familiar as the landing site for the space shuttle and famous as the home of the "right stuff" test pilots.

Although spectacular, all rocket launches are frustrating to their designers. Even the most powerful propellants have a performance ceiling that limits their efficiency. For every ton of equipment hoisted aloft — be it scientific equipment into orbit or a warhead beyond ene-

my lines — five tons of fuel are needed. This ratio is immutable with conventional rocket chemistry and Dr Christe's team in the Edwards Propulsion Directorate may have found a way around it.

It took four months to synthesise a stable form of the molecular fragment by combining gaseous nitrogen with a negatively charged mixture of arsenic and fluorine. The result was a few grains of a solid compound that, says Dr Christe, looks like table salt. "Except that if you put it in a salt cellar you'd soon know about it," he adds.

Its explosiveness comes from the way in which the positively charged molecular fragment latches on to its nearby brethren. Natural forms of nitrogen have attained the chemical equivalent of Zen, the lowest energy state, where it remains unreactive and stable. What Dr Christe has done is to

break a barrier in energy terms. He uses the analogy of a river. "Water doesn't run uphill," he says. "You can make it go up a hill, but you have to put some energy in. Chemically speaking, we have kicked this form of nitrogen up the hill."

Dr Christe is particularly proud that they got it right first time. The research chemistry of today no longer uses just test tubes and blind faith, but rather expensive and complex equipment that takes up whole laboratories. Dr Christe's work has to be carried out in a vacuum, with tubes fashioned from stainless steel and Teflon, and complicated spectrometers which look for the tell-tale signs of unusual molecules on an infinitesimal scale.

Very little was left to chance. The use of supercomputers means that

the innumerable permutations of chemical combinations can be predicted onscreen. "We can predict whether the material is stable and if it exists, minimise the processes needed to create it," he says.

Yet actually to create new molecular fragments is more an art than an exact science. The results still lie with "intuition and instinct" for others have failed to create any new forms of nitrogen. Dr Christe has scored some notable successes. In 1986 he succeeded in separating pure fluorine from a compound by chemical means rather than using vast amounts of energy. "I've had a pretty good batting average," Dr Christe adds.

Another surprise is that they have been able to create N_5 on a microscopic scale and not just as a handful of molecules. In November, they produced about 100 milligrams, but now they could create

half a gram. Because of its instability, they have to keep it cold and pack it within dry ice at a temperature of -80°C. Even so, they are taking no chances: the ampoules, which contain the new form of nitrogen, are made of Teflon.

In the annals of inorganic chemistry, Dr Christe has produced a wonder stuff that some believe may be too unstable to use. But if it could be kept stable and manufactured it would be an ideal fuel for the upper stages of rockets and missiles.

He refuses to be drawn, merely saying he has no idea what it might lead to. "Scientifically, it is very spectacular," he says. "But if you want sure bets, go to Las Vegas. I can't predict what will come out of this work."

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to realise that the field of polynitrogen chemistry may surprise us yet.



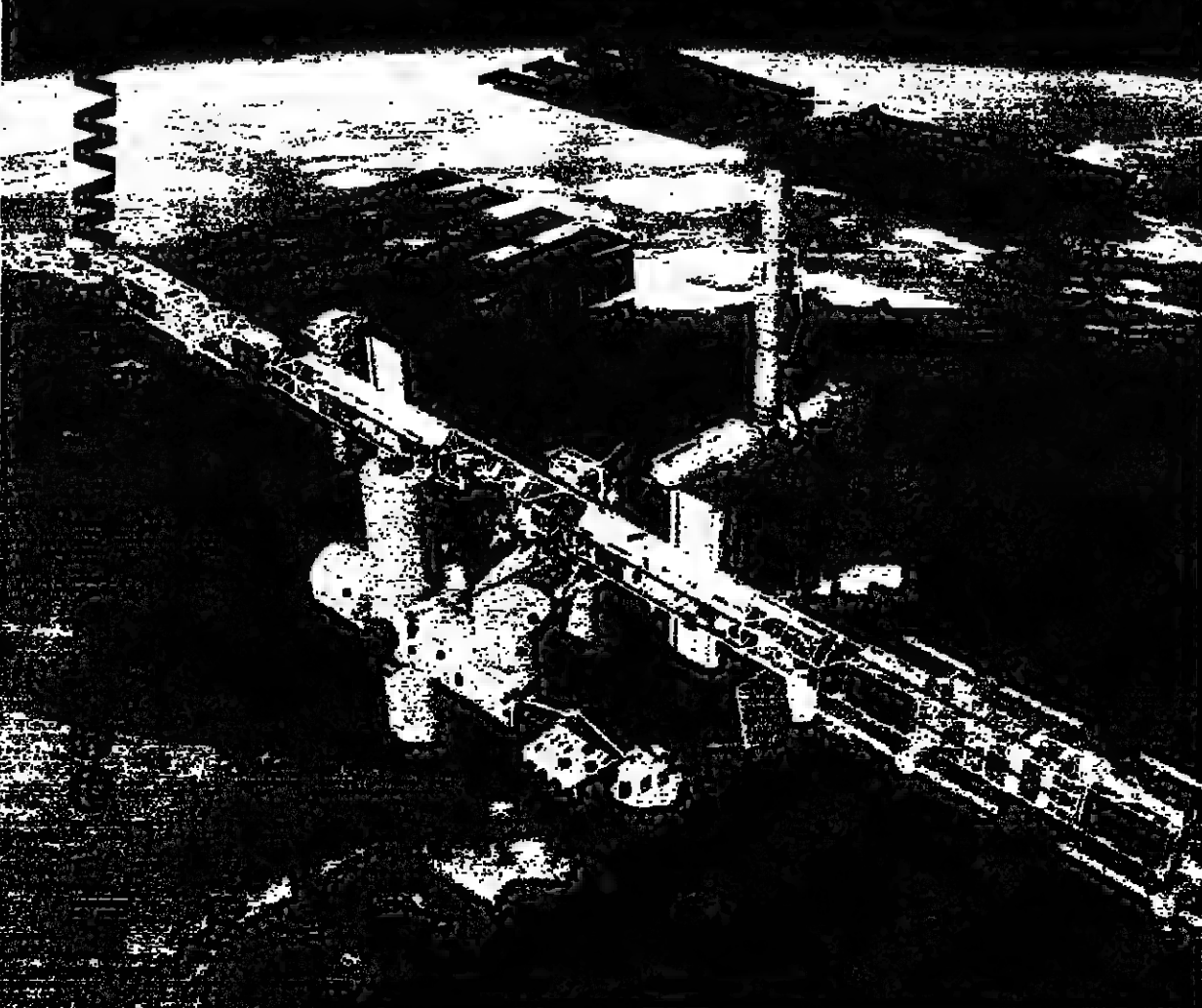
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☐ Heart disease ☐ Solar breakthrough ☐ Pecking order

A bug in the heart

THE evidence linking heart disease to a common bug is growing. The idea is appealing because it would help to clarify the causes of a disease too often blamed on its victims' behaviour.

No doubt diet, smoking, obesity, genetic predisposition and lack of exercise have an influence, but they do not explain the third or so of victims who have no such risk factors.

The latest piece of evidence, published in last week's *Journal of the American Medical Association*, drew on just such a group: 3,315 British patients who had had a heart attack, despite having no known risk factors. NHS medical records enabled any drugs they had been prescribed to be compared with those given to a control group of 13,139 patients who were matched in other respects but had not suffered a heart attack.

One difference emerged, according to Dr Herschel Jick of Boston University. Those who had heart attacks were much less likely to have been treated within the previous three years with two types of antibiotics — tetracyclines or quinolones. Other antibiotics — penicillins, macrolides, sulphonamides and cephalosporins — showed no such effect.

The striking thing is that this points to *Chlamydia pneumoniae*, a bacterium that has already been fingered in the search for an infectious cause of heart disease. The bug attacks the lungs and can cause pneumonia, although most people who carry it suffer no apparent ill-effects. *Chlamydia* is sensitive to tetracyclines and quinolones, less so to other antibiotics. So the suggestion is that taking these antibiotics for other reasons can kill off the *Chlamydia* in-

fection and protect against heart disease. The findings are consistent with results published 18 months ago by Dr Sandeep Gupta, of St George's Hospital Medical School in London. He found that in heart attack survivors, the chances of having another attack depended on the number of *Chlamydia* antibodies found in their systems. Those with the highest levels — indicating infection with the bug — had four times the chances of repeat heart attacks than those with the lowest. If they had been given antibiotics, however, the risk went down.

So how much more evidence is needed before heart attack survivors, at least, are routinely given a course of antibiotics? Doctors who have spent the past 20 years urging heart patients to heal themselves seem surprisingly reluctant to take back the responsibility. There are sound reasons for this: the evidence falls some way short of proof, and the routine consumption of antibiotics by millions of people risks the development of drug resistance. The American Heart Association responded to the study by saying it is "much too early to consider prescribing antibiotics to people at risk for heart attack". But individuals may well disagree.

A new trial to be launched next month in the United States could help. The plan is to recruit 4,000 people at 28 medical centres, assign them at random to one antibiotic or placebo tablet a week, then follow them for heart symptoms for three years. Dr Ward Kennedy, of the University of Washington in Seattle, believes that the chance of antibiotic-resistant bacteria emerging is small. "We think it's worth the risk," he says, "because the question is so important."



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

New way to harness the Sun

SOLAR cells are an attractive source of electricity, but low efficiency is still a drawback. At best, the cells can convert to electricity only about a quarter of the sunlight falling on them.

Now an accidental discovery by Harvard University physicists could help to improve that.

Tsing-Hua Her, Eric Mazur and Claudia Wu were trying to find new ways of etching circuit patterns on silicon, using a laser and various gases inside a chamber. They found instead that their process turned the surface of the silicon into a forest of perfect spikes, standing up from the surface of the chip.

This was useless for electronic chips, but ideal for solar cells, which are also made of silicon. Light falling on the spikes was reflected to and fro in a random fashion, and much more was absorbed. Solar cells made from the spiky silicon generate about 60 per cent more electricity than flat ones; at least for certain wavelengths of light. Discover reports.

How the spikes form remains a bit of a mystery, but the team suspects that there is a chemical reaction between the layers of silicon heated by the laser and chlorine or fluorine gas.

At present the process is slow and expensive, but better methods of production are being sought.

Power of the pecking order

SOME behaviour, such as yawning, seems to be catching. Once one person starts, everybody else joins in. Two ecologists from Rutgers University in New York have found that this also applies to the common tern. Among colonies of the birds in a salt marsh in Manahawkin Bay in New Jersey, the amount of preening that goes on depends on the number of birds present. When more than two or three

are gathered together, preening increases, report Brian Palestis and Joanna Burger in *Animal Behaviour*. One bird starts and the rest follow, like teenage girls perfecting their lipstick at a disco.

On one occasion, five terns were sitting quietly until one started preening. Within two minutes, four of them were at it, and the odd one out was the only bird looking in the other direction. The date, time of day or the weather could not explain this pattern.

Preening serves various purposes, including ridding the birds of parasites. But explaining why it should be socially triggered is tricky.

Perhaps, the two ecologists wonder, it is because living in colonies increases the rate of infestation by parasites, so

that increased preening among social birds is needed to control them. But it could also have something to do with the pecking order, subsidiary birds taking their cue from those at the top.

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♂ What men want from women ♀

Surprise him with a smile



Couples need to learn new skills, says John Gray, the author of *Men are from Venus, Women are from Mars*

The dynamics of the relationships between men and women have changed more in the past 35 years of this millennium than the 900 years that preceded it. The emergence of the two-career family, coupled with the advent of the birth control pill, are the two most apparent factors for this rapid change.

For centuries, men and women existed in different spheres. Men assumed the role of provider and protector, working for the most part out of the home. Husbands felt that wives did not expect them to be sensitive; they were the breadwinners, and skills in this area brought them the appreciation that all men so enjoy. Adults who are 35 or older remember that when their fathers returned from work, they were not to be disturbed.

For women, it was the reverse: her domain was home and hearth. Traditionally, her problems, and those of the children, took a back seat to his more worldly concerns. Women quickly learnt that there was a right place and right time to talk to him.

The women of today are daughters of mothers who could not teach them how to share their feelings in a way that did not make men defensive, or how to seek support so that a man would respond positively. Most women of previous generations did not understand how to nurture a man without mothering him, or how to accommodate his wishes without sacrificing



Many of the men of previous generations did not understand the importance of monogamy and making a woman feel special

their own. How could that generation have prepared the women of today for a world that few of us imagined 30 or more years ago? These mothers could not teach their daughters how to be both feminine and powerful at work and at home.

In a similar fashion, men today have no role models for leading and directing the family in a way that respects and includes their partners' points of view. Fathers could not teach their sons how to commu-

nicate with a woman without giving in or arguing. They found it difficult to remain strong while providing their partners with emotional support.

Many of the men of previous generations did not understand the importance of monogamy and making a woman feel special. Our fathers did not understand how truly to give the empathy and sympathy required by women. They did not know how to do the little things that fulfil

a woman. Simply put, our parents couldn't teach us the advanced communication skills necessary to make relationships thrive in a world where men and women have been put on an equal basis. These changing times, when both spouses are out pursuing a profession or simply a better standard of living, demand that we open our hearts and minds to the process of change — both at home and at work. Ultimately, this process will make the

world a better place. I very much believe that the reason my book *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* has become such a success is because of this very simple message: men and women speak different languages and, with better communication skills, they can maintain a happier and more fulfilling relationship. Minus these skills, married couples too often find that their communication leads to resentment; and when resentment moves

in, romance moves out. Of the approximately 1,000 letters that I receive each month, many express amazement that the simple communication techniques featured in my books have turned their relationships around. Here I will focus on just two such techniques, one for her and one for him.

For her: learn the right way in which to enlist your loved one's support. Women find themselves in a modern world with many demands that bring out their "male" sides. They spend the day communicating with men without being able to express their feelings in a free and open fashion. Now more than ever it is important for women to have the opportunity to reconnect with their feminine sides when they are at home. If a woman is not afforded this need, this suppression will become a source of growing frustration. For a woman to gain her partner's understanding about this, she should simply say: "I just need to talk about my feelings in order to feel better. You don't have to say anything or do anything."

For him: learn how to listen when your partner is upset without getting upset yourself. This is an important skill that allows a man to give a woman what she needs most: emotional support. She wants to have her feelings heard, not fixed. This is not as easy for him to accomplish as a woman might suspect. Unfortunately, when a man hears a problem, he morphs into a Mr Fix-it. Instead, he must suppress his instinct to rush in with a solution. His Mr Fix-it tendencies are heard by her as an attempt to invalidate her point of view, and cause her frustration level to escalate.

Men instinctively want a woman with a smile. When that smile is not forthcoming, men see it as either their fault or their duty to replace it. Women, just like their male counterparts, can come home from the workplace with a variety of frustrations. Men must remember that what she is saying is not meant directly to criticize you. These frustrations often have nothing to do with their mates. At times like this, it is vital for a man to be skilled in the art of listening so that he can give her what she wants most: an ear to hear her.

When a woman is upset, timing is essential in offering solutions. When a woman feels secure enough to share her feelings with the man she loves, and he can listen without being wounded, their relationship is far better prepared to survive and thrive in these changing times.

● John Gray's new book, *How to Get What You Want and Want What You Have*, will be published by Vermilion on March 11, 1999.

● John Gray will give a lecture, *Mars and Venus in London, at the Peacock Theatre, Kingsway, London WC2 at 7.30pm on March 26. Tel 08700 715 715 for details*

Only a super bottom will do

Trying to identify what men want from women is tantamount to sacrilege round my way. If I had suggested such an idea to my grandad he would have winced violently, taken me to a quiet room and informed me of one of life's golden rules: "Never make any demands on the ladies, young scamp. They can see straight through us. Just keep your mouth shut, stay out of trouble and do as you're told." Which I consider excellent advice.

You see, men don't really like to think about it too much on account of the fact that as we have absolutely no idea what women really want from us, and very little realistic hope of finding out, it seems churlish in the extreme to

The girl of my dreams has her own agenda, says Tim Southwell

make specific requests of our own. It's not that we don't care what women want, it's just that we're so painfully aware of our own shortcomings that it's easier for us to identify the things that make us tick and protect our own boundaries of happiness. Consequently, over the years we have developed several "no go" areas for ourselves which, if crossed, set alarm bells ringing. Comments such as "You're not watching the football round my house", "You should start reading *Men's Health*" and "I just don't think Laurel and Hardy are funny" tend to

make a man feel uneasy. We don't want someone interfering with the crucial elements of our character that bring peace in this crazy ever-changing world.

What men really want from women is for them to have their own career — there's nothing more sexy than a woman with her own agenda — but also find time to have children, raise them at home, listen to our banal ramblings about work when we get back, put the kids to bed while we watch the football and then slip into something comfortable yet wildly erotic.

See, men want everything there is to be had. We want filthy, unpredictable, passionate sex, coupled with the comfort of a clean, predictable, calm relationship. But we don't want a woman who sits at home waiting for us to validate her existence.

We want women to have their own friends and interests so that we have to compete for their time — so long as we like their friends, and their interests don't lumber us with the type of responsibility that could interfere with our own interests or quest for an easy life.

We want someone who will dress like Grace Kelly at dinner parties, Monica out of *Friends* around the house, and Kathy Lloyd in the bedroom. We want someone who will tell us to shut up when we're harping on aimlessly, yet share a concrete belief in what we do and who we are. And we also want someone who understands that just because we have a favourite All Saint (Melanie Blatt as you ask), it doesn't mean that we love them any less.

I like nothing better after a hard day at the office than coming home, changing baby son Alfie's nappy and talking gibberish to the poor chap for half an hour. But I don't want to do this every night. Some nights I want to go out for dinner with my girlfriend. And some nights I want to go out with my pals, get drunk, talk football — and pretend to have a glad eye for the ladies. And I want my girlfriend to support me all the way.

Men want a soulmate, but not the grasping, suffocating kind that alienates all your friends to the point where she really is your sole mate.

It's great if the woman of your dreams gets on with all your friends, but not so great when she's laughing at all their jokes more than yours. I want my woman to laugh at my jokes and, once she has regained her composure, coolly inform all and sundry that "he should have been on the stage". Even when she's well and truly on the verge of running me through with a bread knife.

"Hark at Lord Muck!" I hear you cry — and yes, you're right. Imagine if we did find women like this. We would be come shallow, self-obsessed and tedious. It's only because



Baby talk: Tim and son Alfie

We don't get all of this, and never really expect it, that we manage to develop into the kind of people who do make an effort to look after the children, think occasionally of bringing flowers home and try to remember to do stuff that will alleviate the enormous weight on our girlfriend's child-rearing, relationship-maintaining, career-bearing shoulders.

But to summarise, I'd settle for the following in this order — men want a warm heart, gripping conversation, a knack for inventing useful household appliances and a firm grasp on foreign policy. Not to mention strawberry-blond hair, a penchant for kinky sex and a bottom that never sags.

Well, you did ask.

● Tim Southwell is the Editor of *Loaded*.

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Counting the cost of Monica

The Lewinsky affair leaves victims tarnished but honours even

With just two days to go — maybe only a day — until the formal end of the impeachment trial of President Clinton, we can already see the shape of the landscape scoured out by the year-long deluge of the Lewinsky saga.

An astounding year in American politics has left as many losers as winners. Most of all, there are scores of plain victims, with privacy and family finances now shattered.

At the head of the ragged tribe of winners is Mr Clinton himself. Even if the Senate censures him, and even if the special prosecutor Kenneth Starr then indicts him, we might as well say that Mr Clinton has emerged victorious. The drama produced three climactic moments when it seemed that he had only days left when the story first broke in January last year; when he admitted an "inappropriate relationship" with Monica Lewinsky on videotape on August 17; and in the run-up to the November 3 elections, when congressional Democrats appeared to be fleeing the sinking ship. He survived them all.

So has his wife. In fact, she has prospered. For now, her closest colleagues content themselves with murmuring "she'll wait for the world to come to her" after leaving the White House. But as that date approaches, she may well feel that a bid for a New York Senate seat is the most attractive step towards a new future.

Monica herself will probably be all right, we can hope, after this week's videotapes of her testimony. Poised and low-voiced, four years and a world away from the neck-ticking Beverly Hills girl on the Linda Tripp tapes, she chided House Republicans for fishing for "salacious" details. "I wish you wouldn't use that word — you're talking about my relationship," she said, even at this late stage in the saga adding to its list of deathless quotes. Her own voice does her enough credit to suggest that Andrew Morton's soon-to-be released account of her life should not be an embarrassment. Even for Monica, it seems, there may be life after Lewinsky.

On the principle that in politics, any publicity is good publicity, a dozen previously invisible characters perhaps should also be called winners. In the common imagination, Kenneth Starr will be preserved for ever, smiling glassily as he puts out his duffbins, or resting his flask of coffee on his car roof while he hangs up his jacket in the back seat. The white-haired, black-suited bulk of Henry Hyde will for ever be snipped over the Senate lectern, gripping it as if carrying tablets of stone.

Democrats in Congress are also winners. The question is whether they can seize the true prize and regain the House of Representatives in the year 2000 elections. That dream, which still seemed elusive after the mid-term elections, has seemed achievable since Mr Clinton's State of the Union speech last month. Richard Gephardt, leader of the Democratic minority, is

surely right to calculate that he stands a better chance of becoming Speaker at the head of a new Democratic majority than he does of becoming President.

But as far as winners go, that's about it. Mr Starr's zeal, repellent to many, has almost certainly done for the Office of the Independent Counsel. It is unlikely to be recreated in its present form after it expires in June. There is widespread agreement, as Justice Antonin Scalia famously argued at the office's creation in 1988, that it is "unaccountable and unconstitutional".

The presidency itself has also been undermined. Never mind about the sanctimonious pronouncements that the aura of the Oval Office has been tarnished. More important is the precedent of bringing civil actions against a President while still in office. The Supreme Court's original judgment that Paula Jones's sexual harassment case would not disrupt Mr Clinton's presidency is now indisputably wrong; the potential for future Administrations to be seriously shaken by politically inspired legal cases remains.

The saga may also have hurt Vice-President Al Gore's chances of reaching the White House. True, the main impediment to Mr Gore's hopes remains himself. His stiffness, despite all the resources available to him, is one of those mysteries of public life. But the Lewinsky affair has made his task more difficult.

As long as the President was struggling for survival, it was hard for Mr Gore to distance himself. At a time when he should be grabbing the stage from Mr Clinton, and making speeches on the economy, on Russia and Jordan, Mr Gore has

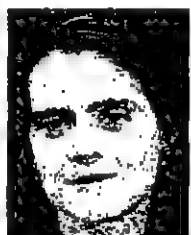
allowed his boss to continue to hog the limelight. There is a growing Washington murmur that the scandal may also have deterred savvy operators from joining the Gore camp; the lack of enough first-rate, experienced people on the prospective campaign team is conspicuous, and a luxury he cannot afford much longer.

Most sympathy should go to the scores of people dragged into the investigation. They have been forced to run up legal bills of hundreds of thousands of dollars on the chance they might contradict the half-memories of some other bit player.

The investigation by Mr Starr and Congress has cost taxpayers, on estimates, between \$40 million and \$50 million. It would not be surprising if it has generated equal lawyers' fees for those testifying or defending themselves: the Clintons' legal bills alone may eventually approach \$10 million.

It is that spectacle of waste and misery which leaves such a sour taste. But on a purely political score-sheet, there is a chance the saga will have prompted a neat reversal, helping to put Democrats back in control of the House of Representatives — and a Republican in the White House. In that case, each side might call it a draw.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Brown Maddox



Fire, film — and forget

What would be a New Labour diplomat? You have a Prime Minister desperate to outdazzle the Blessed St Margaret. You have a hyperactive boss trying to outdazzle Gordon Brown. You are told to bear any burden, crash any summit, book any jet, bomb any foe, in the cause of new Labour. You have to take orders from Alastair Campbell and Jonathan Powell. To cap it all you have to "lie abroad for your country" — ethically.

In the circumstances, I would probably do what Peter Penfold did. I would find a minor dictator with a name like Johnny Korona, call in Our Boys and topple him in the name of democracy. I would stage a triumphal parade in the capital, with critical women crying halallelujah to the great white elephant of Downing Street. I would declare Tony Blair the prince of freedom. Then I would get the hell out, before the whole thing went pear-shaped.

The Sierra Leone operation went just fine. A victory was won. Mr Blair was declared a saint. The spin-doctors were jubilant and Our (former) Boys and the cameramen left town. The country was promptly immersed in a bloodbath, with bandits cutting off arms, legs, ears, lips and genitalia. But we were out. In other words, the operation was par for the new liberal interventionism. It was a brilliant example of the laser-guided surgical diplomacy that Robin Cook has long boasted would supplant the "new world disorder" of the Tories: "fire, film and forget" diplomacy.

None of this is of concern to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee. Its report is chiefly worried that somewhere within the glorious edifice of the Foreign Office, wires were crossed. Messages had been sent by post not telephone. Calls had been missed. Even worse, ministers had been badly briefed. An offence had been committed against the golden British art of administration. The committee chairman, Donald Anderson, repeated the cliché about the Foreign Office Rolls-Royce looking more like an old banger. Somehow we had not played cricket in Sierra Leone. Chaps had not behaved like chaps. As punishment, heaven help us, management consultants should be summoned. Meanwhile, back in Sierra Leone the holocaust continued.

History is awash in messages for want of which an empire is lost. Nobody should decide process and

No foreign field is so far that the control freaks of new Labour would not have their flag fluttering over it

accountability. The woes detailed in the report are indeed woes, though hardly more woeful than revealed in last year's Legg report into the same affair. But no empire fell over Mr Penfold's missed message. As the report says, United Nations arms sanctions are a shambles. Mr Penfold's collusion with the mercenaries was naive, but given the spin-doctors to handle it. When Nelson said at Copenhagen "I really do not see the signal", all England cheered.

Those who recall Mr Cook's juvenile hysteria on the pavement outside the Scott inquiry must smile at his discomfiture yesterday. How he used to deride the Foreign Office defence behind which he now takes refuge. His attack on the report for using "the colourful language of political knockabout" is rich. Even richer was Downing Street's contribution. How dare the press write about Sierra Leone, said Mr Campbell or one of his stooges, when today it had been told to write about the Government's education successes? What an interesting response. This hypocrisy is beside the point. Downing Street says the report is unfair and disproportionate. It is certainly disproportionate. As with the Scott report, here is another case of an inquiry addressing itself to a lesser crime, as if to let government off some greater one. Like Scott, the report is high on hindsight, its hindsight is so particular, so magnifying of one detail, as to distort the whole. It is all trees and no wood.

The proper question for a select committee is, what on earth were we doing meddling in Sierra Leone? How much of the blood now being shed in that miserable country is on Britain's hands? If there was a good reason for doing what we did, what

journal *Renewal* analyses the Government's Third Way foreign policy in the most interventionist terms. Edmund Cairns (though it could be Mr Cook) writes as follows: "Britain cannot have an effective security policy without a holistic approach which fights global exclusion... complemented by a defence strategy that is capable and willing to protect civilians in the midst of conflicts." Mr Cairns does not say which civilians or what sort of conflicts. This is naked imperialism.

In pursuit of this garbled objective, Mr Cook now has economic sanctions of varying degrees of severity against half the world's poorest nations. He has bombing threats outstanding against Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic. He is "actively involved" in the future of Palestine. He has sent a minister to parley with the Taliban militia in Afghanistan. Since he has presumably squeezed Sierra Leone dry of "holism", the war in Eritrea must now be tantalising him.

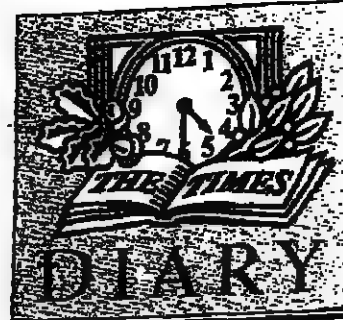
Mr Cook and his French opposite number at present have the parties to the internal conflict in Yugoslavia locked up in a château in Rambouillet. He has told the Kosovo dissidents to lay down their weapons and accept partial autonomy. He is telling the Belgrade Government to grant that autonomy and get its troops out. If it refuses, he will bomb them, or some of them, somewhere, somehow. He will also send in British troops to keep them all in order. All this because murders were committed by paramilitary gangs operating entirely within the borders of a sovereign state. "Third Ways" are apparently above law — and above the heads of parliamentary select committees.

Occasionally we should dare to see ourselves as others do. There is another European state much closer to home, also with a control-obsessed Government that cannot get regional separatists to disarm in return for partial autonomy. That Government has been reduced to sending murderers free and thus risks provoking the revival of a 25-year-old civil war. That Government is at its wits' end. Perhaps some kind foreigner should summon it to a French château and tell it what to do. Perhaps it might even offer to drop bombs if its advice is rejected.

How would we feel then? comment@the-times.co.uk



Simon Jenkins



Smart move

PETER MANDELSON may not have to depart his beloved Notting Hill as swiftly as 1 predicted. Quently Mandy has helped to raise £500,000 for roofless sorts to stay in a hostel in the trendy cardboard box-less London enclave. The dosh, enough to pay back Geoffrey Robinson, will buy a refuge.

The repentant soul added weight to the campaign along with chums Elle Macpherson (below left) and Ruby Wax (right) as well as Lady Powell and Ruth Rendell. Among the spartan centre's attractions are the trained staff who will "give advice on housing and job openings". Save a bed for Peter.

MEANWHILE, Peter's bedtime arrangements are coming under scrutiny again. And we might now learn why Jeremy Paxman felt so guilty after Mandelson was "outed" on Newsnight that he dropped round a letter of apology. Punch says that Donald Macintyre, Mandelson's approved biographer, will report that Paxo enjoyed dinner with Mandelson's close friend Reinhold Altvater da Silva. The jolly affair is said to have taken place at Robert Harris's county home. So



will this be one of Macintyre's disclosures? "I've made it a rule not to talk about the book," he says.

Written off

BEFORE she died, Iris Murdoch destroyed five of her novels that she deemed unfit for publication.

The early works were beginning to interest publishers, so Dame Iris ripped them up 30 years after writing them. "They showed a strong intellectual grip," Peter Conrad, writing her biography, tells me. "But she thought them juvenile. She was a good judge. From the remains I read, she was right."

After destroying one book and tossing it in the bin, Murdoch peered down and remarked that for the first time it looked quite good. Later she rallied, and watched with relief as it was taken by dustmen.

HANDBAG wars at the Tory Winter Ball, where Sir Rocco Forte and Wafiq Said indulged in a spot of competitive tendering for a signed handbag of Baroness Thatcher. The hotelier pulled out of the auction just before his fellow swank bid £12,500. "Wafiq has a lot more firepower than me," Sir Rocco tells me. "It would have been fun but I am a lot better off now."

Smoked out

AN ATTEMPT to exploit the good name of Lord Charles Spencer-Churchill in aid of a planned cigar



bar in Mayfair has backfired. While applying for a licence, the developers suggested that the Duke of Marlborough's brother had lent his support. But Lord Charles left the planning people knowing that he was not involved. The council then refused to give permission.

TOILERS at Cartier have found the answer to Rolex-robbers: wrapping watches in Harrods bags. I hear: "They look like cheap knock-knacks bought by the provincial coach party brigade."

Good heavens

A ROCKET for the Roman Catholic Church from Sir Elton John. The theological thinker and his chum David Furnish are to make a movie of a book the church labelled "shocking and deplorable". In God's Name alleges Pope John Paul I was murdered by the Mafia. Furnish insists that the couple's interest is purely artistic: "It has a case well argued." An argument unlikely to impress John Paul II.

JASPER GERARD

I may never again raise my fedora as I pass Buck House, nor, at some formal dinner-table, wait respectfully until the loyal toast before lighting up

If, this morning, I tell you that my heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains my sense, you will probably nod smugly, knowing my little ways, and say, yes, there we go, he has been overdosing on nicotine again, he has been up half the night smoking, he has only himself to blame, he will get no sympathy from us, it is a filthy habit, look at his fingers, sniff his hair, check his ceiling, clock his clothes.

But while you would be unarguably right on all counts, you would still not have got anywhere near the nub of this particular aching numbness, since it is both different from the marital norm, and immeasurably worse; for while I have indeed been up half the night smoking, that is because I have been up half the night worrying about smoking. More particular-

ly, about the serious effect smoking might henceforth have on me: for what really aches my heart and numbs my sense this fateful morning is that, after six unflaggingly loyal decades, I may never again rise to my feet for the national anthem, never again put folding money on this royal nag or that against the odds, never again raise my fedora as I pass Buck House, never again, at some formal dinner-table, wait respectfully until the loyal toast before lighting up, nor, at some more contentious one, ask a republican to step outside and repeat that. For although the monarchy has been not merely a lifelong habit with me but also a pleasure, a support, and a solace, I am now seriously thinking of giving it up.

That is because, in the shattering decision she just taken to

withdraw the royal warrant from cigarette manufacturers, the Queen — no, make that the queen: if I have not yet given up, at least let me cut down — has turned her back on me.

And what makes that rejection more bitter yet is that it was none other than the man who had always sustained me against the manifold rejections of all the rest: what did I care if theatres and cinemas barred their doors against me, or cabbies threw me out, or doctors struck me off, or public transport belied its name, or chic restaurants directed me to the manky chip-shops opposite, or airlines reduced my transglobal dreams to short-hop nightmares, or even dear friends said would you

mind awfully... what did any of this matter when, back on the lonely pavement, I could slip from my coat-pocket a pack of Silk Cut whose tinny golden escutcheon would catch the moonlight, lion and unicorn rampant to assure me that what I was about to ignite had been personally appointed by my sovereign lady? Not smoke? Dear God, it seemed an act of treason to abstain!

More yet, my gratitude for this approval led me to honour all the rest of her endorsements. While other anxious shoppers trockled the supermarket aisles, squinting at e-numbers, additives, substitutes, self-by dates, fat contents, mineral deposits, national provenances, political rectitudes, and unpeeped other boons

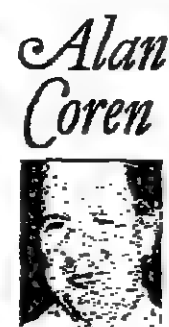
and threats, I have never sought any signal but one. Enter my larder and you will find only her gracious marmalade, her regal fish-paste, her sovereign cereal, her radiant sauce.

What is my scullery but a little shrine to her palate? A place of not just devotion but, yes, communion: oft in the stillly night, when I have fished down for a cold beef sandwich and a glass of stout, a devoted tear has pricked my eye at the thought that, just a few miles up the road, she herself might, at that very moment, be spreading the self-same mustard on the self-same bread, and raising the self-same nectar to her lip.

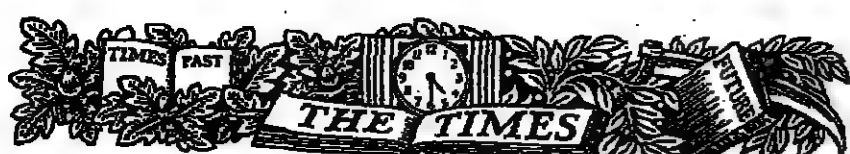
But that's all over, now. Even as I write, the Master of the Queen's Faggots, ordained to sample the market in her service, is glumly stuffing his bits and bobs into his gunny-sack while he waits for his P45 to come down from upstairs, no doubt recalling with a heavy heart those jolly weekly exchanges — "Are one's ciggies still full of flavour?" "Unquestionably ma'am, and as firmly packed as ever." "And the tips sufficiently corky?" "Indeed so, Your Majesty, and a snip at the price." A doomed now to be naught but a secret between him and the tabloid press; and it is therefore time for me, in my turn, to go down and clear out my larder.

Odd, that it should be exactly 400 years since Walter Raleigh taught a grateful queen to smoke. Though it pains me deeply to say it, they don't, I fear, make Elizabeths like they used to.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Alan Coren



FALSE ASYLUM

The current system is neither firm nor fair

Britain's tolerance of asylum-seekers has, in recent years, been heavily strained by foreigners making bogus applications and abusing the system. Reports of such incidents, sometimes exaggerated, have overshadowed the plight of genuine refugees. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, yesterday published the Asylum and Immigration Bill, which he hopes will make the application system "firm, fast and fair" for all. He deserves credit for confronting a treacherous issue before it becomes dangerously divisive.

Mr Straw should ignore criticism that his plans are too tough. Some of the proposals lack detail, and one — forming reception zones for migrants — is ill-advised. Yet, taken as a whole, they show that Mr Straw is addressing many of the failings of the current antiquated system, which is woefully unable to cope with the rising number of asylum-seekers.

The Home Secretary has correctly diagnosed the existing process as a bureaucratic "mess", open to exploitation. Over the past decade, the trickle of people seeking asylum in Britain has swelled into a flood. There were 4,000 applicants in 1988, and 46,000 last year. The ability to appeal, time and again, if an application is refused, means that refugees can wait years before they know their fate. More than 75,000 applicants are currently in the queue. Processing delays cost taxpayers £500 million a year, and give people who would not warrant asylum too much time to vanish or enter a fake marriage. At the end of this sorry, expensive story, seven out of ten applicants are turned away.

The Home Secretary's Bill will accelerate and tighten the process. He has set ambitious targets to deal with applications within two months, and hear any appeal within the next four months. If that appeal is turned down, the applicant will be deported. Such a change is not "unfair", as some refugee organisations suggest, but long overdue. So too is the new regulatory

body to put out of business unscrupulous "immigration advisers" who exploit migrants' ignorance of the application process. Mr Straw is also wisely trying to prevent migrants using wedlock as a legal loophole, by giving registrars new powers to scrutinise suspected "sham" marriages.

Other plans, although well-intended, are less well conceived. The Home Secretary intends to strip asylum-seekers of their right to social security cash benefits, and give them vouchers or support in kind "at a level to ensure their subsistence". The all-important fine print, detailing how this system will work, has yet to emerge. Mr Straw will need to tread carefully in this treacherous terrain. The previous Government received a stinging rebuke in the Court of Appeal when it deprived some refugees of social security benefits.

The most ill-considered proposal aims to iron out an existing anomaly, whereby some local authorities (especially those in the South East) must house asylum-seekers. Most council taxpayers in those areas will support Mr Straw's proposal to deny migrants a choice of accommodation. Yet giving the Home Secretary the power to force local authorities to house them in unoccupied homes (termed "reception zones") is a policy riddled with risk. Unless councils are adequately compensated for the costs of housing and caring for asylum-seekers, this approach could inflame tensions between migrants and local communities. If Mr Straw is really intent on keeping track of bogus asylum-seekers, he should consider the practice adopted in many European countries, where migrants are kept in special hostels until their application has been processed.

The public's willingness to support asylum-seekers depends on the application system being firm but fair. At present, it is neither. Mr Straw has made a commendable start at reform. But the devil is there to trap him in the detail.

PASS THE PARCEL

A game from Sierra Leone for MPs of all parties

The report produced by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee yesterday employs unprecedented language in its assault on the competence of senior civil servants and on the Foreign Secretary's efforts to "obstruct" its work. Robin Cook retorted that the MPs had not produced a single fact that had not appeared in the Legg report last summer. The Prime Minister then dismissed their findings as "wholly disproportionate".

The evidence analysed in this report is certainly similar to that published by Sir Thomas Legg. Some of criticism of the FCO Permanent Secretary, Sir John Kerr — namely that he "failed in his duties to ministers" — might reasonably be considered excessive. That does not mean that the committee uncovered nothing of merit, or that its conclusions are unwarranted.

It is hardly surprising that in strictly factual terms the committee discovered little that differed from Sir Thomas's narrative. They were, belatedly, dealing with exactly the same material and the Foreign Secretary refused to allow them access to those officials in the intelligence community who might have enlightened them further. The story of utter confusion about the meaning of a United Nations resolution that Britain had apparently helped to draft, and the internal communications failures within Whitehall and between London and Sierra Leone, is still shocking. The oral evidence acquired by the committee does add some useful detail to this sorry saga.

The purpose of any select committee document is, crucially, different from that of an official, especially internal, inquiry. Sir Thomas rightly confined himself to the procedural aspects of events — who did

what and when — and steered clear of any comment on matters that might be considered within the realm of political management. It was this aspect that, equally correctly, the select committee felt fell within its remit. In order to carry out that task, the MPs required timely access to relevant documents and individuals. They often found their path blocked by a Foreign Secretary who was determined that the Legg report would be the last word on the shambles. This was, as Donald Anderson, the Labour MP who chairs the committee, complained yesterday, an entirely improper fashion in which to conduct business.

The arrogance of the department during the investigation itself has now been trumped by the shameless efforts of the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to discredit the select committee report after publication. There is no aspect of this episode that reflects well upon the Foreign Office. Tony Blair should not have determined to deploy his personal authority to defend the indefensible.

This sudden ministerial zeal to defend the honour of their mandarins will amuse many in the Foreign Office. They will recall Mr Cook's haste to disown his officials when this controversy first became public. The doctrine of ministerial responsibility may sometimes have been exaggerated but, in moderated form, it is an essential part of the constitution. Officials could be forgiven for assuming that the doctrine has been redefined to mean that ministers take full responsibility for successful policies while civil servants assume responsibility for all failures. It must be hoped that Mr Cook has learnt the lessons of this affair and is today more diplomatic with colleagues at home and abroad than he has so far been with the select committee.

ROCK OF AGES

Or how Debbie burst from her Jurassic Park

Pop music used to be sung by the young to outrage the old. Now it is sung by the old to embarrass the young. More than 30 years have passed since the Stones set their rock revolution rolling. The generation who first grooved along to concerns has grown up to a museum-going middle age. And the announcement that Britain is to open a National Museum for Popular Music is just another sign of this maturity.

Based in Sheffield, this Jurassic Park of pop will revive the personalities of lost decades. The centre's four circular exhibition halls will house a surround-sound auditorium and several themed rooms. Visitors will be taken on a whistle-stop tour of world pop. And music that was born of a spirit of rebellion will be placed firmly in the context of society's cultural canon.

In harking back to bygone times, this centre will serve to reflect current fashions in pop. Funky sounds that should be little more than fond memories have in recent years been enjoying a cultural comeback. Faded stars are shooting back up the charts. Slade had a revival when the Brit charts. Slade covered their classic *Cum On Feel the Noise*. Engelbert Humperdinck, *Feel the Noise*. Engelbert Humperdinck, the easy listening old crooner, has recently been remixed to a dance band beat. Some 20 years since Debbie Harry sang a

succession of number ones, the Blondie bombshell has blasted her way back to the prime pop slot. Even Elvis Presley appears to have proved himself a virtual reality. The dead King recently took headline billing at Wembley, and packed the arena.

Some may complain that, by providing a permanent monument to what should be essentially ephemeral, the National Museum of Popular Culture will destroy the thing that it most professes to love: the spirit of protest from which rock culture rose. The museum curators and exhibition designers hope that the centre, through educating visitors, will inspire them to make music themselves, to take up an instrument or form a band. They hope further to feed and encourage one of Britain's most vibrant and lucrative industries.

In comparison with other forms of cultural expression, with writing or painting, for example, pop is still in adolescence. Its pulse beats strong. Its music may currently be going through a phase of imitations, of retro remixes and rebranded names. But with the imagination and innovation of each generation, pop will rebel and find new fashions. And the rock of ages can only serve as a firm foundation for music's future.

'Haunting' lessons of Balkan history

From Colonel Charles H. Wilson (ret'd)

Sir, The reservations in your timely leading article, "Gladstone's shade" (February 5), urging Mr Blair to give the full reasons to the British people for putting troops in harm's way in Kosovo are well made.

The "gamble that logic of survival will win out over nationalist passion in a region where logic has the shallowest of roots" is a forlorn hope in the light of Fitzroy Maclean's experience, as described in *Eastern Approaches* (Jonathan Cape, 1949). Of the Partisans he said:

All had one thing in common, an intense pride in their movement. For them the outside world did not seem of interest or importance. When they met their way of National Liberation, their struggle, their victories, their sacrifices.

On the subject of the Nato intervention force — variously put at about 35,000, of which Britain will provide the lion's share proportionately — patently there is little to compare between the Balkan war of the Forties and the present turmoil. Nonetheless it is a haunting thought that the Germans and Italians employed upwards of ten divisions with supporting troops and aircraft (200,000 men) against the Partisans. Whenever the Axis troops came near to success the Partisans extricated themselves, faded away and reappeared elsewhere to fight another day.

Two facts have not changed, the doggedness of the Slav soldier and his devotion to a cause.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES WILSON,
Foxhills,
70 Long Road, Framingham Earl,
Norwich NR14 7RZ,
February 5.

From Mr G. L. Leigh

Sir, Does the United Kingdom owe a duty to the Kosovan people? If so, how does it arise and what precisely is its extent? If the answer is humanitarian and limitless I wonder why we do not dispatch troops worldwide, eg, to stop the Hutus and Tutsis killing one another.

You hint in your leading article that war in the Balkans must be stopped as international instability threatens our trading interests. How so? Arms are one of our principal exports.

Yours faithfully,
G. L. LEIGH,
85 Leith Mansions,
Granville Road, Maidale Vale, W9 1LJ,
February 4.

From Mr Garth ap Rees

Sir, Gladstone's shade walks not only in the Balkans but in Africa as well. In 1894, the final year of his last administration, Uganda was granted the status of a British protectorate by the Crown. A Tenniel *Punch* cartoon depicted Uganda as a founding place at the feet of Queen Victoria.

Your leading article refers to British troops serving the cause of European peace and that, as "a trading nation with global interests", Britain must be "prepared to deploy its forces where international stability is threatened".

The inference here is that we do not regard the current events in Sudan, Somalia, the countries of the Great Lakes region, Angola and Liberia as threats to international stability, despite trading with them. Only Sierra Leone merits a "punishment" and considerable additional support for a democratically elected President, a resolute and admirable High Commissioner and embassamentment over the Sandline involvement.

After a lifetime of working in and for Africa, dating from 1958, I can only reflect sadly that, irrespective of the government of the day, the final score-line always reads Europe 1 Africa 0. Despite all the talk of globalisation, it seems to me that basic attitudes have barely changed for a century.

Yours faithfully,
GARTH AP REES
(Member, UN Development Programme, 1964-92),
Cranhill House, Piers Road,
Cranmore, Somerset BA4 4QH,
February 4.

Exploring Mars

From Dr Patrick Moore

Sir, Your report (February 2) on plans for a robot aircraft, *Kitty Hawk*, to fly over the Red Planet takes me back to the only conversation I ever had with Orville Wright at the very start of the Second World War, when I was an (admittedly under-age) teenager learning how to fly.

I had about ten minutes' talk and I well remember saying: "Will we ever fly to the Moon?" He paused, and said: "Well, they said we couldn't fly over the Earth, but we did."

Neil Armstrong, the first man on the Moon, and Orville Wright, the first aviator, could have met. I am sure they didn't, but their lives overlapped.

Where is the first man on Mars?

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK MOORE,
Farthings, West Street,
Selsey, Sussex PO20 9AD,
February 7.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Editors face 'war' over regulation

From the Executive Director of the Association of British Editors

Sir, Editors should not be unduly concerned about being unloved by the politicians nor, for that matter, by the low esteem in which they are held by Middle England.

However, they ought to be alarmed when friendly peers such as Lord Williams of Mostyn and Lord McNally (letter, February 6) show a more than keen interest in the performance and procedures of the Press Complaints Commission. Former PCC member Gerald Isaacs (letter, same day) also highlights the need for a fundamental reappraisal of the PCC's remit.

When the chairman, Lord Wakeham, insists the commission works as well as it can do within these terms of reference he effectively makes Lord McNally's case that "things cannot be left as they are".

Lord McNally speaks, no doubt, with an awareness of the legislation that lurks in the volume of directives waiting to be issued by the European Union, which will, assuredly, put considerable restraints on the British media if it is decreed that self-regulation is not working.

Not unnaturally, editors would prefer to ignore such threats in the hope that they will go away. We always have done so in the past and can point to the fact that David Mellor's notorious last-chance saloon never actually closed its doors.

Sadly, therefore, we have done little with the time borrowed, courtesy of the previous Government's other concerns. We have not honed the instrument of self-regulation because we are aware that sharp blades can be dangerous. There is now, however, a growing awareness that a blunt weapon in the wrong hands can be equally damaging.

Editors need, as a matter of some urgency, to step back from their individual circulation battles and unite to prepare for the inevitability of war

being waged against them by self-interested politicians.

Yours faithfully,
JOCK GALLAGHER,
Executive Director,
Association of British Editors,
49 Frederick Road,
Birmingham B15 1HN.

From Sir Richard Storey

Sir, On the matter of the Press Complaints Commission's right to initiate an investigation, Lord Wakeham (February 6) expresses his somewhat legalistic and pedantic views trenchantly, but they are helmet!

The Press Council, on which I was privileged to serve under the then Mr Patrick Neill (now Lord Neill of Bladen) and subsequently under Sir Zelman Cowan, both conspicuously brilliant and distinguished chairmen, did undertake its own investigations without prior complaint. It was respectable, by reason of its very high standards of adjudication, albeit not everywhere respected — partly owing to its self-imposed laborious procedures in the name of natural justice, partly to the political climate of the time.

So far as I recall, such a right of investigation was easy to assume, undertake, and accomplish. I have always advocated it for the PCC.

Surely other self-regulatory bodies are, typically, able to investigate without prior complaint and also have teeth, for the lack of which the present PCC is frequently, and probably rightly, criticised.

Surely it is now time for the PCC to stop its special pleading and, by studying the virtues of other regulatory bodies, seek to emulate them in their powers of investigation and the penalties they impose.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD STOREY
(Chairman, Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers plc, 1973-98),
Settlington House,
Malton, Yorkshire YO17 8NP,
February 8.

Nuclear power

From Professor Ian Fells, FENG, FRSE

Sir, Sir Christopher Harding and Sir Bernard Ingham invite us to "embrace nuclear power" (letter, February 2; see also letters, February 6).

Over 40 years ago, when the industry was in its first flush of youth, we embraced it eagerly. Now, in mature middle age, it provides 17 per cent of world electricity. Without it, carbon dioxide emissions from electricity generators would rise by 17 per cent. Nevertheless, the green movement, despite its concern for the environment, cannot bring itself to see any virtue in nuclear power and is determined to close down the industry.

It seems to me that the way ahead must be with "clean energy", which is a mix of renewable and nuclear energy. There is a synergy between them which is becoming apparent.

If anyone can show me how to provide the predicted doubling, even trebling of world energy demand post-2050 without a large nuclear input, particularly if some attempt is made to curb the carbon dioxide emissions, I shall be delighted.

But if, as I suspect, this proves to be impossible, let us get on with making nuclear energy as safe and efficient as we can, instead of constantly sniping at it and demoralising the workforce.

Yours faithfully,
IAN FELLS,
University of Newcastle,
Merz Court,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU,
February 6.

Hoddle and Woodhead

From Mrs Helen Simmons

Sir, It seems that, according to the Government, a remark on a belief in reincarnation is grounds for sacking someone (letters, February 1, 3, 4, 5).

If, however, a high-ranking member of the teaching profession says it could be "educative on both sides" for an adult in a position of authority over a teenager to have sex with that teenager (even though he has since apologised), then it seems the same Government doesn't think such a remark worthy of the sack (report, "Blunkett rejects call for inspector to resign", February 8).

Is the world crazy?

Yours,
HELEN SIMMONS,
Willow House, Swaffham Road,
Wendling, Norfolk NR19 2AB,
February 8.

Business school fees

From Mr Wafic Rida Said

Sir, Your Diary column's report (February 2) on my role at the Business School at Oxford University is somewhat wide of the mark.

Firstly, the level of tuition fees charged by the Business School is nothing to do with me. I have no involvement in academic issues or in the running of the school. These are matters for the school's director and faculty, and the university more generally.

Secondly, you suggest that Oxford University "discouraged" my support for building the Business School. In

From Sir James Hann

Sir, We must not allow strongly held views on the nuclear industry — such as those of Peter Melchett (letter, February 6) — to cloud the issues surrounding the future supply of energy. The accident at Chernobyl was a tragedy of huge proportions, but the generation of electricity by nuclear means does not pollute and is safer and cheaper than at any time in the industry's short history. More to the point, unless there is a major technical breakthrough on other energy sources, nuclear generation will be needed.

Energy supply is a global issue which will be significantly affected by the huge growth in world population: expected to double within three decades. Add to this factor people's increasing aspirations, the environmental issues of global warming, the predicted threefold increase in world demand for electricity and the finite nature of fossil fuels, and we have a potential shortfall in energy supply which could only be filled by nuclear and renewables.

This matter is serious. I believe we need an authoritative, independent study, properly structured and funded, to determine the facts based on current knowledge, to review all the fuel options and to recommend to government positive ways forward. To ignore the problem by brushing it aside would be dangerously complacent.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES HANN (Chairman,
Scottish Nuclear, 1990-95),
Bramley Cottage, Bullhouse Lane,
Wroughton, Oxford OX4 5NY,
February 7.

Brawls in the air

From Dr Stuart Anderson

Sir, Given the increasing number of media reports of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour on board passenger aircraft, is it not time for the airline industry to review its policy on the supply of alcohol to air travellers?

Human nature being what it is, individuals cannot be relied upon to regulate their own behaviour when intoxicated. Further, in the interests of maintaining fair play to all passengers, why don't airlines offer designated alcohol-free seats for individuals who may prefer not to have to sit next to intoxicated fellow travellers, especially in such a confined space?

Yours sincerely,
STUART ANDERSON,
74e Oatlands Drive,
Slough, Berkshire SL1 3HU,
February 4.

fact, my support for the school was solicited by the university's development office and Vice-Chancellor and the project was endorsed by an overwhelming majority of its dons.

Thirdly, you appear to believe that the school is mine and that it is merely "linked" to the university. The truth is that it is a fully integrated part of Oxford University which happens to bear my name in the same way that a host of other institutions carry the name of their major donors.

Yours faithfully,
WAFIC RIDA SAID,
27 Avenue Princesse Grace,
98000 Monaco,
February 5.

Ageism not only unfair to oldies

From Professor Emeritus Peter Landsberg

Sir, Ruling out life peers over the age of 75 from sitting in the Lords (report, February 5) would send a bad signal to the rest of the country. Lord Jenkins of Hillhead and Lord Healey, for example, could make much more substantial contributions in the Lords than many of their younger colleagues.

The proposal reflects the well-known tendency to assess people and organisations by counting something, even if that something is somewhat irrelevant. The reason? Counting is easier than thinking.

Yours etc,
PETER LANDSBERG,
Faculty of Mathematical Studies,
University of Southampton,
Southampton SO17 1BJ,
pjl@maths.soton.ac.uk
February 5.

From Mr Malcolm MacLeod

Sir, Mr John Carlisle, a former Conservative MP (letter, February 4), quoting an article by Mary Ann Sieghart, refers to Tory "old lags". He disparages former MPs of "near retirement age" and a "middle-aged" adviser at Central Office. Mr Hague is praised for youthfulness and Mr Carlisle recommends that he surround himself with colleagues of similar age. I suspect these views command more support than they deserve.

By what right does Mr Carlisle assume that the young are inevitably superior in "quality" to those talented older members of our society and institutions who have honed their life skills and gained sagacity through long experience? Human qualities are variable, and with age they often vary for the better.

Is it not time for ageism to be condemned in our national life as loudly as racism or sexism?

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM MACLEOD,
62 Main Street,
Cleator, Cumbria CA23 3BT,
February 5.

Reform of the Lords

From The Viscount Davidson

Sir, The letter today from Mr Piers Ashworth, QC, headed "Take the politics out of the Lords", reminded me of the time when I inherited my title from my father in 1970.

Both of my parents had been in the House of Commons as Conservative MPs, and both had been ennobled by Conservative prime ministers. It was therefore natural that I should take the Conservative whip.

But, throughout my time here, I have always considered that my privilege and duty as a (hereditary) peer outweighed my political background. So it was, as a backbencher, I voted on occasions against the policies of the Conservative Government. When later I became a whip, I felt no chagrin when the Government was defeated, for this was the House of Lords doing its duty and proclaiming its *raison d'être*.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
DAVIDSON,
House of Lords,
February 1.

The Monty style

From Mr J. Howard-Jones

Sir, A "Monty" anecdote from Miles Noonan's *Tales from the Mess* (Hutchinson, 1983) to add to your correspondence (letters, January 18, 22, 28; February 3).

As a lieutenant-colonel in the 1930s, the subsequent field marshal was commanding a battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in India. The brigade commander, late of the Grenadier Guards, was a stickler for correct parade ground drill.

At an annual parade, he calculated that Montgomery was six paces to the left of the precise centre of the troops lined up behind him. He told the colonel to correct this error. Montgomery stood his ground and ordered the 500-strong battalion to move six paces to its left.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HOWARD-JONES,
Cholsey Grange, Ibbstone,
High Wycombe, HP14 3XT,
February 5.

Reds under the beds?

From Mr Michael Hencke

Sir, Your report today on the health benefits of Chilean wines in limiting the "harm done by destructive free radicals" is disquieting, given that this seems to be broadly what his supporters claim General Pinochet brought to the Chilean body politic.

Are those intending to drink this elixir thus best advised to consult their lawyers about immunity from Spanish legal action or, as Chilean cabaret savignons far outperformed Spanish ones in the University of Glasgow tests, would the Spaniards just be suffering from a case of sour grapes?

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HENCKE,
40 St George's Drive,
Pimlico, SW1V 4BP,
February 4.



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 10 1999

Sacking of Vaux chief renews talk of takeover

By DOMINIC WALSH

VAUX, the brewing and hotel group based in Sunderland, was the subject of renewed takeover speculation last night after the shock sacking of its chief executive and finance director after a boardroom feud.

In a terse statement, the group said that Martin Grant, chief executive since June, and Neil Gossage had "left the company with immediate effect and have ceased to be directors". Peter Catesby, the managing director of its Swallow Hotels division, has been appointed group chief executive.

Analysts believe that the departures could prompt interest from rival hoteliers, including David Michels, the Stakis chief executive. Mr Michels made an unsuccessful attempt to buy the company last year and observers believe that the forthcoming sale of Stakis to Ladbroke need not be a barrier to a £400 million bid for Vaux.

The clash at Vaux is understood to relate to the board's recent decision to name a management buy-out team as preferred bidder for the two breweries and 350 tenanted pubs put up for sale in September. The MBO, led by Frank Nicholson, brother of the group's chairman, Sir Paul Nicholson, is worth an estimated £70 million and is backed by Alchemie Partners, the venture capitalist.

Mr Nicholson, who has been given a four-week period of exclusivity in which to conclude a deal, was the only bidder for the entire package, the only other substantial bid being one of about £15 million from its close neighbour, Mansfield Brewery, for a package of 115 pubs and the Wards Brewery in Sheffield, which would have been closed.

Messrs Grant and Gossage are said to have favoured the Mansfield deal, which would have meant Vaux retaining the other 235 pubs and closing the Sunderland brewery for redevelopment — a controversial decision given the implications for jobs in an area already badly hit by the manufacturing crisis. The pair are said to have argued that such a move, allied to a new beer supply agreement with one of the big brewers, would have been worth £25 million more than the MBO bid.

Although the decision to go with the MBO was taken by a sale committee consisting of the independent non-executive directors and the group's advisers, BT Alex Brown and Noble Grossart, the two men are said to have privately approached some of Vaux's biggest institutional shareholders to express their unhappiness with the decision.

A source said last night: "This had been brewing for some time. Grant's decision to centralise the running of the company rubbed people up the wrong way, and he never felt comfortable with Vaux's northeastern culture. Their decision to go to institutions was viewed as going behind the backs of the rest of the board." *Tempus*, page 24

SmithKline Beecham poised to shed 3,000

By PAUL DURMAN

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM, the pharmaceutical group seen as vulnerable to a takeover, yesterday unveiled a wide-ranging shake-up that will include the loss of 3,000 jobs and the sale of businesses worth \$2 billion (£1.2 billion).

Jan Leschly, chief executive, pledged the group to make savings of £200 million a year by 2002 — and to increase its underlying earnings by 13 per cent this year, before accelerating to "mid- to high-teens growth" in 2000 and 2001.

The sales of Diversified Pharmaceutical Services for \$700 million and of 70 per cent of SB Clinical Laboratories for \$1.025 billion will reduce the group to its biggest and most profitable businesses in pharmaceuticals and consumer healthcare.

Mr Leschly reiterated his confidence in a strong, independent future for SB, which has been questioned since the collapse of its proposed merger with Glaxo Wellcome a year ago. He said: "We are a stronger company, we are focused more than ever on consumers and pharmaceuticals, and we have retained our access to valuable data [from DPS and Clinical Laboratories]."

He added: "We are not talking to anybody, we are not planning to talk to anybody. The discussions with Glaxo Wellcome are behind us."

SB's shares rose 33p to 831½p, although the 6 per cent rise in annual pre-tax profits to £1.7 billion it reported was slightly below the consensus of forecasts. Analysts remain convinced of the potential for further deals between the world's leading drug companies.

Most of the 3,000 jobs will be lost in manufacturing, as SB closes or sells some of its 67 plants around the world to create "centres of excellence". The company would not spell out the likely impact on the UK.

The efficiency drive, which will also include global purchasing agreements, will cost £750 million to implement over four years. The first £90 million, including £38 million of asset write-offs, were charged against the 1998 results.

SB also lost £446 million after tax on the sale of DPS, the US drug purchasing manager that Mr Leschly bought for \$2.3 billion shortly after becoming chief executive in 1994. DPS, which lost £32 million last year, will be acquired by Express Scripts, a similarly sized rival. Mr Leschly said that SB had "achieved value" through its ownership of DPS.

Clinical Laboratories, the American blood and urine-testing business, will be sold to Quest Diagnostics, though SB will retain a 29.5 per cent stake. Mr Leschly said this would allow the group to benefit from the "major synergies" from the deal.

The savings will allow SB to pump more money into research and development, where spending represented 19 per cent of pharmaceutical sales in last quarter of 1998. Excluding currencies, SB's results represented earnings and profit growth of 10 per cent, although underlying pre-tax profits grew by only 7 per cent to £18 million in the final quarter. Pharmaceutical profits grew 7 per cent to £1.3 billion, led by the 21 per cent growth from Serono/Paxil, the antidepressant, sales of which topped £1 billion. However, after a bad fourth quarter, consumer healthcare profits slipped 3 per cent to £385 million.

SB is paying an interim dividend of 3.66p, a 10 per cent increase.



Jan Leschly, chief executive, who committed SmithKline Beecham to an independent future

Cordiant in the spotlight as Scott moves up

By JASON NISSE

SPECULATION mounted yesterday about the future of Cordiant Communications Corporation, the advertising group that split from Saatchi & Saatchi a year ago, after Charles Scott moved up to executive chairman.

Cordiant said Mr Scott, non-executive chairman until yesterday, was now having to devote more time to the company. Four years ago a bitter feud between Mr Scott and the Saatchi brothers — Lord Saatchi and his brother Charles — led to their departure from the company they founded.

Yesterday Cordiant denied this latest move would have any impact on Mr Scott's professional relationship with Michael Bungey, the chief executive of Cordiant. A spokesman said Mr Scott was concentrating on investor relations and had to spend at least one more day a week at Cordiant.

The company has been at the centre of bid speculation, which has linked it with both True North, the US advertising group, and WPP, the owner of Ogilvy & Mather and J Walter Thompson. Cordiant has denied it has been in any takeover talks.

It also has two shareholders well known for their activism. David Herro, the Chicago fund manager who played a key role in the ousting of Lord Saatchi, holds a 12 per cent stake. Phillips & Drew, the fund manager that backed the ousting of David Montgomery at Mirror Group, has 22.8 per cent.

City analysts have noted that companies in which P&D has a large stake, such as Mirror, Wembley, MEPC, Booker and Sears, have been the subject of bid approaches in recent months, with P&D seen as a keen seller.

BA's difficulties set to continue, says Marshall

By ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

LORD MARSHALL of Knightsbridge, the chairman of British Airways, said yesterday that difficulties in the airline business are unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future.

The comments came as the airline posted a quarterly pre-tax loss for the first time in four years. BA lost £75 million for the three months to December 31. In the comparable third quarter of the previous year it made a profit of £80 million.

The economic turmoil in Asia and BA's dependence on business travel traffic put pressure on the company's figures.

Weakness in the Far East, said the company, has destroyed demand for flights there, prompting rival airlines to deploy more aircraft in Europe and the US. This increased capacity on the transatlantic routes and led to price cutting.

The key statistic measuring revenue per passenger kilometre

travelled fell nearly 12 per cent in the quarter.

Lord Marshall said: "The situation is not likely to improve materially in the short term."

The overall pre-tax loss was exaggerated by movements in the yen inflating the size of BA's borrowings in Japan. In the City, where analysts had expected worse news, the shares rose 74p to 388½p

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Diller creates \$20bn online retail combine

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

USA NETWORKS, the American entertainment company run by Barry Diller, is creating a new online retailing powerhouse worth \$20 billion (£12.2 billion).

In the latest merger in the Internet sector, USA Networks will take over Lycos, the third-biggest online search engine, and combine it with its Home Shopping Network television channel and Ticketmaster, the telephone ticket seller. Financial details are yet to be issued, but Lycos investors will receive extra shares if the combined market value exceeds \$45 billion in two years' time.

The new company aims to be the first fully integrated electronic retailer, combining the persuasiveness of television with the ease of access of the Internet and the telephone. The company, to be called USA/Lycos Interactive Networks, will have sales of \$1.5 billion.

It will be owned 61.5 per cent by USA Networks and 30 per cent by Lycos shareholders.

Lycos shareholders are estimated to receive a premium of only 2.5 per cent after their shares' recent sharp rise in expectation of a deal. Lycos previously had talks with General Electric, owner of the NBC television channel.

USA/Lycos will reach about 30 million Internet users and 70 million television homes.

Walls has key role in Servisair bid battle

By PAUL ARMSTRONG



Walls: "connected"

STEPHEN WALLS, who has become better known for his golden handshakes than his achievements in the boardroom, has emerged as a key player in the takeover battle for Servisair, the baggage handling group.

Mr Walls, who is a director of Servisair, is linked to a possible takeover bid being prepared for the company by Compass Partners, a manager of venture capital funds.

Compass yesterday refused to discuss the prospective bid,

or its ties to Mr Walls. Servisair confirmed he was "connected with a possible alternative offeror" but would not elaborate. Servisair is the target of an £81.4 million hostile takeover bid from Amey, the contract services provider.

The offer is equal to 200p a share and compares with yesterday's closing price for Servisair of 218½p. The company's shares peaked at 505p in 1997 but fell to a low of 102p last October.

Brian Staples, the Amey

chief executive, yesterday questioned Mr Walls' involvement in any alternative bid for Servisair. "If it [the bid] is real, it causes me some concern because Stephen Walls clearly has an intimate knowledge of the accounts of the business," Mr Staples said.

Mr Walls is well remembered in the City for the remuneration packages he has reaped in return for his services to shareholders.

In its defence document sent to shareholders yesterday, Servisair described

Amey's offer as opportunistic. John Willis, the Servisair chief executive, said: "The offer we have does not reflect the customer relationships we have and the position we have in Europe to go forward."

However, Mr Staples described Servisair's defence as "jam tomorrow" and said that shareholders should be told whether there was an alternative bid.

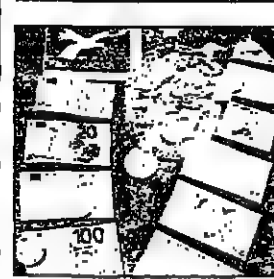
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THE MAN AND HIS MONEY

1988: Given £1 million payout when Plessey is taken over by GEC.
1992: Leaves Wiggins Teape, Appleton, with £775,000 after merger with Arjomand-Plessey.
1992: Non-exec chairman of Alther Fisher (£80,000 salary). Left last year.
1999: Remains director of Lorho Africa.

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Forger's dream

Counterfeiters ready for arrival of euro notes
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STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100 5778.5 (-55.0)
Yield 2.78%
FTSE All Share 2670.65 (-22.20)
Nikkei 13902.66 (-48.53)
New York Dow Jones 8212.59 (-78.52)
S&P Composite 1228.43 (-13.34)

US RATE

Federal Funds 4¼% (4¼%)
Long bond 99¼% (96¼%)
Yield 5.71% (5.35%)

LONDON BOND

3-mth interbank 9½% (9½%)
Liffe long gilt 116.70 (116.30)
Lurex (44p)

STERLING

New York 1.6357 (1.6393)
London 1.6368 (1.6327)
Frankfurt 1.4488 (1.4515)
SF 2.3168 (2.3213)
Yen 187.22 (185.66)
S index 100.8 (100.6)

\$\$\$ DOLLAR

London 1.1301 (1.1322)
SF 1.4177 (1.4180)
Yen 114.42 (114.65)
S index 104.3 (104.6)
Tokyo close Yen 114.69

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Apr.) \$10.30 (\$10.30)

GOLD

London close \$287.05 (\$288.75)
* denotes midday trading price
Exchange rates Page 22

Closure threat for Ordnance

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

BRITISH AEROSPACE is to start closing its Royal Ordnance factories if it cannot find a buyer for the business — potentially cutting thousands of jobs.

The move, its first steps towards a shake-up of its defence systems, is part of a tough rationalisation programme designed to improve returns in defence systems.

The tough rationalisation programme would also cut a swathe through managerial ranks in other divisions and sell off unprofitable businesses. It comes ahead of BAE's planned £7 billion merger with GEC Marconi.

The threat to Royal Ordnance comes as the loss-making business struggles amid a massive decline in orders from the Ministry of Defence.

Ordnance threat, page 2
Commentary, page 23

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150

Virgin to put £1.25bn into trains

Richard Branson's Virgin Rail yesterday signed a £1.25 billion deal — the single biggest investment in new stock — for new 140mph tilting trains that will cut an hour from London to Scotland. It came as the company appointed Chris Green, a former senior British Rail figure, as its new chief executive.

Virgin will take on 53 eight-car and nine-car tilting trains that will be made in Europe but assembled by trainmaker Alstom in the West Midlands. Angel Trains, Britain's biggest train leasing company, will invest £592 million in the trains, the remaining £661 million going on maintenance. The first train will be delivered in 2001, with complete delivery by September 2002.

Capital growth

Capital Shopping Centres, the retail landlord that owns Lakeside in Essex and Metro-Centre in the North East, said its out-of-town shopping units provided a safe haven from the turmoil on the high street over 1998 — allowing it to increase average rents by 12 per cent. Its net asset value rose 18 per cent, to 462p a share over 1998, and 80 per cent of the valuation uplift was driven by rental growth. Pre-tax profit was £87.1 million (£77.4 million, with investment income up 10.5 per cent to £107 million). The shares added 17p to 373p.

BWD advances

BWD Securities, the stockbroker, is to lift its total dividend by 60 per cent after reporting a 64 per cent rise in year-end pre-tax profits to £5.4 million. A final dividend of 8.5p, payable on April 9, takes the annual dividend to 12p, compared to 7.5p last year. Earnings per share have jumped to 19.2p from 11.1p. Group turnover rose 22 per cent to £223 million, of which just under half was fee income.

Drug approval

Glaxo Wellcome has received its first regulatory approval for Relenza, its new treatment for influenza. After approval by Sweden's Medical Products Agency, Relenza should quickly win the go-ahead to be marketed across Europe under the European Union's mutual recognition procedure. The new medicine, which is inhaled, was developed by Biota, an Australian biotechnology company.

Confidence pick-up in CBI survey challenged

By SAEED SHAH

THE GLOOM hanging over manufacturing deepened yesterday with a survey showing falling orders and continuing weakness in business confidence in all regions.

Although the Confederation of British Industry quarterly regional trends survey showed fewer firms were pessimistic about prospects across the regions in January, compared with October, analysts said that the marginal increases in optimism seen in recent surveys are not justified by the economic outlook for industry.

Stephen Lewis, chief economist of Monument Derivatives, said that the CBI had been fooled by an apparent rise in confidence among manufacturers. "Financial markets are far too optimistic about UK output prospects," he said. "The fact that the answers to confidence questions are slightly less negative than a few months ago still means that industry's outlook is negative."

Jonathan Loyne, of HSBC Markets, said: "The slight pick-up in confidence over the last month or two, brought about by lower interest rates, is not backed up by an improvement in demand — it is

hope, rather than a response to what has happened in the economy. We could start to see this fade away again if home and overseas markets do not improve."

In the CBI survey, for January, the measure of confidence is -40 per cent, an improvement on the -58 per cent recorded in October. Wales was the most pessimistic region in January, with a reading of -61 per cent, followed by the West Midlands at -50 per cent. The most upbeat region was Northern Ireland, with a positive reading of 3 per cent; East Anglia was next, at -6 per cent.

The last time confidence nationally was positive in the survey was October 1997.

Mr Lewis forecast that manufacturing would contract by 2.5 per cent this year. The CBI survey showed that manufacturers in every region have responded to falling orders by cutting output and jobs. Employment reductions are expected to gather pace in most regions, especially the North, the North West, the West Midlands and Scotland.

The CBI has called for interest rates to fall to 5 per cent "by the spring".



Danny Rosenkranz, left, and Tony Isaac unveiled a profit fall

Profit woe takes toll of BOC share price

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

SHARES in BOC Group were marked down heavily yesterday as the industrial gas supplier unveiled a 9.2 per cent drop in pre-tax profits for the December quarter.

The profit fell to £84.9 million and comments from Danny Rosenkranz, chief executive, that BOC's gas business, which accounts for 82 per cent of the company's turnover, had suffered "increasingly difficult trading conditions", saw 8.5 per cent wiped from BOC's share price in early trading. A partial recovery later saw the shares close down 5.7 per cent on the day at 814p.

Mr Rosenkranz said he was at a loss to explain the City's hostile reaction to the results at BOC, whose finance director is Tony Isaac, and believed the market had been well-informed of its trading position.

He said lower volumes had been almost entirely offset by the reduced costs that had flowed from BOC's efficiency drive. Gas products generated a £94.4 million operating profit in the period, down from £101 million in the previous corresponding period.

Mr Rosenkranz said he believed gas volumes this year would be similar to 1998 and profit margins would be the same, or slightly better because of cost-cutting.

The vacuum technology division registered a widely expected drop in operating profit from £12.3 million to £1.6 million.

Tempus, page 24

Valuation dispute halts Abbot merger

THE £500 million merger of Abbot, the oilfield services company, and ProSafe, of Norway, has collapsed after disagreement on valuations. The merger, proposed last month, would have been on a 50-50 basis, despite Abbot's larger market capitalisation. The 1997 operating profit of both groups were similar. News that talks had failed lifted Abbot's shares 30p to 175p yesterday. Alasdair Locke, Abbot's chairman, said: "There's nothing wrong with ProSafe. We think they are excellent. It was a perfectly valid disagreement about price."

The proposed deal, seen as a sensible response to the mergers sweeping the oil and gas industry, would have created a big provider of offshore inspection services, mud-processing equipment and fabrication of offshore modules. ProSafe and Abbot each said that their 1998 results would be in line with market expectations, but some analysts said the failure of the deal after a month of talks leaves both vulnerable to takeover.

Senior News Corp post

LACHLAN MURDOCH has been named senior executive vice-president of The News Corporation, parent company of The Times. He will assume responsibility for the company's US print operations, including HarperCollins, the publisher, the New York Post newspaper and News America Marketing, the newspaper insert service. Mr Murdoch, 37, son of Rupert Murdoch, News Corp's chairman and chief executive, remains chairman and chief executive of News Limited, its Australian arm.

Amstrad in the black

AMSTRAD, the consumer electronics company, returned to profit in its first half, earning £4.1 million before tax in the six months to December 31, after a pre-tax loss of £900,000 in its previous first half. Sales rose to £45.5 million, from £30.9 million, lifted by strong demand for television and video products. Amstrad began supplying digital satellite receivers to BSkyB in October. Earnings per share were 3.56p, against losses of 1.14p. The interim dividend rises to 0.3p, from 0.2p.

Pub deals lined up

PUBS 'N' BARS, the AIM-listed pub minnow, is poised to acquire 37 pubs in two deals with a total value of about £15 million. The bigger deal will see the company acquire the 34-strong Real Leisure group, which owns 18 per cent of Pubs 'n' Bars and runs its four pubs under a management agreement. Pubs 'n' Bars is also thought to be acquiring three other pubs, taking its estate to 41. The company, capitalised at just over £2 million, is likely to fund the deals largely with paper.

Pycraft suitor revealed

SHARES in Pycraft & Arnold, the chartered loss adjuster, fell back 3p to 654p yesterday as Fishers International, the financial services group, was flushed out as its suitor. Pycraft said on Monday that it had received a bid offer which had been made at a "modest premium" to Friday's closing price of 53p. Yesterday Fishers said that it was in "advanced discussions" to take over Pycraft, whose shares had leapt from their recent 12-month low of 49p.

Slow recovery for oil

GLOBAL demand for oil is likely to recover even more slowly in 1999 than previously expected because of the spread of economic slowdown in developing countries, the International Energy Agency said yesterday. The IEA, the West's energy watchdog, has shaved its annual demand forecast, estimating that demand would rise by just one million barrels per day (bpd) or 1.4 per cent to 74.67 million bpd this year. Last month the IEA forecast 1999 demand at 75.05 million bpd.

PowerGen buys stake

POWERGEN has paid £38 million for a 49.9 per cent stake in LG Energy, an independent power producer in South Korea owned by LG, the industrial conglomerate. LG Energy is spending £209 million building a gas-fired plant, which will become the country's first independent generating station. Ed Wallis, chairman of PowerGen, said that he expected South Korea to continue to be one of the world's fastest-growing energy markets despite its region's recent economic downturn.

Siemens accuses rivals for Internet acquisitions

SIEMENS, the German electronics group, yesterday accused its rivals of "throwing away shareholders' money" by acquiring overvalued Internet and technology companies (Chris Ayres writes from Berlin).

Volker Jung, a senior executive of Siemens, which is unveiling its own strategy in the communications sector, said: "There is a clear overrating of stock going on. Fantasy has become more important than reality, which is dangerous. We will not throw away our shareholders' money, but other companies are clearly doing that."

The comments were a clear reference to the \$20 billion purchase of Ascend Communications by Lucent Technologies, the former telecoms equipment division of AT&T. The companies, both based in the US, have benefited enormously from the burgeoning demand for Internet services over telephone wires. The deal valued Ascend at nearly 90 times 1998 post-tax earnings.

Herr Jung made the comments while attending a conference in Berlin to mark the company's increased focus on information and communication products.

Regulator attempts to avert MBO paralysis

ACCOUNTANTS were yesterday given a get-out clause by their regulator over the Year 2000 bug in an attempt to avert a paralysis in the management buyout market (Jason Nissey writes).

The Auditing Practices Board issued a bulletin that states under what conditions accountants are able to sign Financial Assistance certificates, a requirement under the Companies Act that allows a leveraged buyout of a limited company. The certificates say that a company can meet its debts as they come due over the next year.

There had been worries that accountants would not be able to sign these certificates because of fears that the Year 2000 bug in computers could have such an adverse effect on companies' finances that it could force them into receivership.

The APB said accountants can obtain an opinion from the directors of the company being bought out that they can deal with the Year 2000 bug. So long as the accountants consider the director's report to be "not unreasonable", they can sign the Financial Assistance statement.

Commentary, page 23

Broker funds warned

THE Personal Investment Authority (PIA) has issued its stiffest warning yet against the managers of broker funds (Caroline Merrell writes).

Hundreds of thousands of investors hold £1 billion in broker funds, which are operated by independent financial advisers. The funds have been criticised for poor performance and for double charging.

David Peffer, chief executive, said yesterday: "Investors should be aware that an IFA firm has a conflict of interest when recommending a broker fund which it manages. Existing investors should watch the performance carefully and ask themselves if they are getting value for the extra charges."

Amvescap lifted by US market

PROFITS at Amvescap, the fund manager that took over GT Global last year, rose 30 per cent to £231.3 million last year (Caroline Merrell writes).

The increase in profits was generated by the big rise in US markets, where Amvescap holds the majority of its investment. Funds under management averaged \$232.9 billion (£145 billion) for the year, up £26.2 billion. Part of the increase was generated by new business of \$4.6 billion.

The acquisition costs of GT Global were revealed to have come in at £48.6 million. The majority of this was severance pay to GT staff. In total, the integration of GT Global with Amvescap is expected to cost 600 jobs. The final dividend of 5p gives a total of 8p, up 14 per cent on last year.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	94.8	94.8
Belgium F	20.34	20.34
Canada C	61.64	61.64
Cyprus Cyp L	2.566	2.566
Denmark Kr	0.8847	0.8847
Spain Ptas	11.36	11.36
France F	9.17	9.17
Germany M	1.7854	1.7854
France F	2.997	2.997
Greece Dr	483	483
Hong Kong \$	13.81	13.81
India Rupee	17.854	17.854
Indonesia Rp	1,299	1,299
Israel Sh	7.04	7.04
Italy Lira	203.7	203.7
Japan Yen	107	107
Netherlands G	1.9364	1.9364
New Zealand \$	1.299	1.299
Norway Kr	13.12	13.12
Portugal Esc	200.48	200.48
S Africa R	10.80	10.80
Spain Ptas	203.7	203.7
Sweden Kr	11.36	11.36
Switzerland F	2.474	2.474
Taiwan NT\$	135.93	135.93
UK £	1.753	1.753

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Bad air day for Ayling



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

This spring, British Airways will embark on a new staff training programme entitled "Putting People First Again". Admirable though this may be, it does rather beg the question of where BA has been putting people recently. Among both staff and customers there has been a suspicion that people were not featuring near the top of BA's priorities.

If you take pride in being the "price leader", a concept that airline operators interpret in the opposite way to grocers, then well motivated staff doing their best to look after passengers are essential. Otherwise price leadership just looks plain expensive.

Bob Ayling has been focusing on profit rather than people and there can be no doubt that the drastic cost-cutting he instigated was essential to BA's long-term survival. But if the new training programme represents a realisation that profits depend on people, there is a chance that BA could rebuild its reputation as the world's favourite airline, at least with shareholders and those passengers who do not object to paying premium prices for extra legroom and linen napery.

That there will continue to be a growing number of people prepared to do just that is crucial to Mr Ayling's strategy for the airline. Although BA has launched

Go to cater for price-conscious fliers, Mr Ayling is loath to see suits and briefcases climbing aboard. Companies may talk of cost cutting but he clearly does not expect them to take the exercise as seriously as BA has done, exporting jobs to India and cutting cabin crew wages.

It is unfortunate for him that the economic problems of the Far East have encouraged other airlines to wing into BA's more lucrative routes with business class seats on offer at discounted prices and, apparently, found some people prepared to shun the price leader. He is convinced that Asian and Latin American businessmen will soon be taking to the air again and that the interlopers will fly away, leaving BA with its prices intact and its profits ready to swell.

It is a brave strategy and yesterday the stock market gave the slenderest indication that it may be beginning to believe in it. The third-quarter figures took the company into the red, but not as deep as analysts had feared, and there would have been a profit but for the effect of currency move-

ments on an aircraft financing deal. The cost-cutting drive, unlike most airlines, is coming in ahead of schedule.

He may now be feeling that he can spend a bit of time on his other job, as supreme of the Millennium Dome in Greenwich. That will sadly prevent him from joining other BA executives in the sky when 2000 dawns, but he has every confidence they will have a safe flight.

MoD has to play Russian roulette

British Aerospace profited mightily in the 1980s from being seen as a strategic national plc. Its business was so bound up with government that it could safely be entrusted with other strategic national assets, such as Rover and Royal Ord-

nance, which the Tories wanted to privatise but which could not stand on their own. As reward for playing this role, BAE got the businesses at bargain prices.

Royal Ordnance was prime supplier of ammunition and explosives to Her Majesty's forces, the most powerful in Europe. It was needed not least because the loyal Belgians would not supply us ammunition for the Falklands force. But the Ministry of Defence wanted it to compete on, as it were, an arm's-length basis, without guarantees of orders.

In the plan to sell the ammunition factories, there was to be a golden share to stop them being owned by foreigners. But as BAE was buying, this was not deemed necessary. BAE itself had just such a restriction on ownership.

Such easily held assumptions did not stop BAE selling Rover for a bigger sum to BMW once

positive cashflow had turned into a desperate need for investment. Selling Rover into the "safe" foreign hands of BMW made industrial sense and was the key to BAE's financial recovery. Leaving the UK without a home-owned motor manufacturer was just an unhappy side-effect. Still less can BAE be blamed for giving notice that it will sell or close any Royal Ordnance factories that have not been turned into property developments. The MoD has been using the world glut of ammunition to win a peace dividend for taxpayers by buying abroad. Orders for Royal Ordnance ammo have worse than halved. It is not viable.

In essence, however, BAE, like BMW, is now holding a gun to the Government's head. Give us orders or ask yourself if the plucky Belgians would supply material for another flare-up in

Ulster or intervention in Kosovo. The Longbridge saga will remind ministers that to be relaxed and civilised about foreign ownership of vital businesses leaves you impotent in your own house and wide open to blackmail. Europe's most powerful forces are no use without bullets.

What's bugging the accountants?

What is the difference between "reasonable" and "not unreasonable"? If you are an auditor, it could be £100,000 a year on professional indemnity insurance.

Yesterday's bulletin from the Auditing Practices Board offers a classic get-out clause for accountants fearful of the millennium bug. Accountants are concerned that the Financial Assistance statements they sign as an essential part of management buyouts, verifying that a company can meet its debts for the next 12 months, might look a little misleading if the bug hits the company and it goes bust in 2000. Aggressive in-

vestors might be tempted to start talking to lawyers about the accountants' negligence. With admirable foresight, the APB has rushed out a form of words to get around the possibility.

The auditors must ask the directors whether they think the bug will have a material impact on the company, its suppliers or its customers. If the response is no, then the auditors have to decide not whether this is "reasonable", because that would require them to spend a lot of time checking, but that it is "not unreasonable". The APB says this will require a "low level of inquiries", conducted from the perspective of an "informed layman".

Some may think an informed layman could often improve on the work of qualified auditors.

To the wall?

STEPHEN WALLS has enjoyed a remarkable career. That it is not yet at an end is testimony to remarkable determination and very thick skin. Should he now get involved in a bid battle for Servisair, his opponents will find plenty of ammunition. Even his starting point, as a director of Servisair, raises questions over his reasons for rejecting Arney's bid. But the biggest question must be whether it is wise to want a company with Walls as a director.

Tie Rack ex-chief returns

NIGEL MCGINLEY, who resigned as chief executive of Tie Rack 12 months ago, has returned to his old job to try to rescue the retailer from its worst-ever year (Fraser Nelson writes).

Roy Bishko, Tie Rack's founder and chairman, who is to step back from daily management, said: "I told him we needed him because we work well together. While he was here, we never made a loss."

The appointment came as Tie Rack said it was heading for a loss that "will not exceed £7.5 million" - against City forecasts of a £4 million loss. However, City investors were more taken by Mr McGinley's return, marking the shares up 3p to 22½p.

Reuters warns of slower progress

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

REUTERS, the international news and information group, yesterday gave warning that lower revenue growth was likely this year, although savings from a reorganisation would also start to take effect.

Peter Job, chief executive, said that price increases introduced last month would be offset by a fall in new orders in the final quarter of last year as clients reacted to the crisis in emerging markets. The company also suffered a sharp setback in Russia and weak demand in Asia, with the exception of an encouraging performance in Japan.

Reuters announced a 7 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £80 million for the year to December 31. Profits were struck

by a £50 million allowance for goodwill, after a change in accounting practice, and reflected a £78 million fall in interest after the return of £1.5 billion of capital to shareholders. Before currency costs, the pre-tax profits were up by 2 per cent.

Revenue rose by 5 per cent, to £3.03 billion, and operating profit rose 2 per cent.

Mr Job said: "We turned to our advantage the many ups and downs of 1998, translating them into a strong underlying performance, with operating profit at comparable rates up 14 per cent."

The chief executive also expressed increasing confidence in the company's ability to "address the millennium issue" -

something that has hung over its share price. Reuters had successfully handled the move to the euro, he said, and was drawing up back-up plans, with most of the basic work done. Dealing with the millennium bug is likely to cost Reuters a total of £45 million.

Mr Job also spoke of Reuters' growing presence as an information provider on the Internet. He said: "We are getting 100 million page views a month off the main search engines."

A final dividend of 11p lifts the total to 14½p, from 13p. The shares, which have had a strong rally since October, fell 33p to 833p.

Tempus, page 24

Stoves hit by cooker imports

AN INFLUX of fashionable Italian cookers from Smeg and Range Britannia has cut interim profits of Stoves, the Merseyside oven-maker, to their lowest for eight years (Fraser Nelson writes).

The company said that the sustained strength of sterling is helping its European rivals to pitch themselves at much lower prices to Britain's richer households.

Pre-tax profits plunged to £404,000 in the half to November 30, from £2.83 million last time. Earnings per share were 1.2p (7.6p). The interim payout is held at 2.2p.

Stoves is now trying to cut production costs by up to 10 per cent so it can reduce the price tags of up to £2,000 on its cookers, and is to begin an advertising campaign.

Primesight falls to SMG for £35m

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

SCOTTISH MEDIA GROUP yesterday made its first foray south of the border with a recommended £35 million cash offer for Primesight, the billboard poster group.

The deal, also Scottish Media's first move into outdoor advertising, follows last year's unsuccessful raid on VCI, the video publisher, for which it was outbid by Kingfisher.

Primesight specialises in selling advertising space, mainly on illuminated 1.2m by 1.5m (six-sheet) panels. At the end of last year the company had 10 per cent of the six-sheet market in the UK with about 5,700 poster panels.

Andrew Hanagan, chief executive of SMG, which owns The Herald newspaper in Glasgow and the Scottish and Grampian ITV franchises said: "Primesight is a good fit-

tle business and a useful addition to the group."

SMG intends to accelerate Primesight's expansion programme, with Scotland an obvious target.

SMG has been looking for opportunities to expand into the English media market for some time as further significant media acquisitions in Scotland are difficult because of monopoly problems.

The company is paying 320p a share for Primesight, which represents a premium of 23.6 per cent on the day that offer talks were announced.

SMG has irrevocable undertakings from 51 per cent of the shareholders including all the Primesight directors. There is also a partial share offer of 18.66 new SMG shares and £160 in cash for every 100 Primesight shares.

Profit dip at health care firm

WESTMINSTER Health Care, the nursing home operator, yesterday blamed a shortage of nurses, and the need to employ more agency staff, for its poor results (Manus Costello writes).

John Lockhart, chairman, said rising staff costs meant that the outlook for the nursing home sector in the UK "remains difficult".

The company reported pre-tax, pre-exceptional profits for the six months ended November 30 of £6.6 million, down from £8.4 million. Turnover rose from £70 million to £79 million. Earnings were down to 7.2p a share (9.5p). The interim dividend of 2.85p per share was maintained.

Tempus, page 24

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Online revolution tears up rulebook

To techno-optimists, e-commerce means buying the odd CD or book online as a bit of a novelty. It is, needless to say, much more than this. The exponential growth of e-commerce — digital economy gives a better idea of the scale of the thing — is tearing up the rules of business and economics. Think of life before and after electricity and you get somewhere near the enormity of the change the Internet is bringing.

Luddites are easily bored by all the superlatives inspired by the Internet, but the numbers are genuinely mind-boggling. At the World Economic Forum, which wrapped up in Davos last week, the Internet, e-commerce, etc. eclipsed all other subjects for discussion. It was understandably difficult to focus on thoughts of the crisis of capitalism when capitalism was being given an injection of rocket fuel by events in cyberspace.

Quite sane (if very excited) people were saying that about 10 per cent to 15 per cent of world retail sales will be online in a decade. Business-to-business e-commerce

was an even hotter topic. Forrester Research, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, estimates that businesses bought and sold \$43 billion worth of goods over the Internet last year, against the \$3 billion spent by consumers.

In Davos, there were estimates that business-to-business trade would be worth \$340 billion in three years. One executive, already buying and selling steel on the Internet, suggested that this was already looking too modest. If a good proportion of this \$700 billion-a-year market goes online — likely, given the huge cost savings in terms of sales forces, brokers and the foreign travel costs of physically scouring the world for the best prices — the \$340 billion figure could be met sooner than anyone can imagine.

Steel is but one old-fashioned industry that is using the new technology.

Industry exchanges are popping up all over the Internet, linking buyers and sellers by providing timely and trustworthy, one hopes, market information. MetalSite is an online exchange for flat-rolled steel, the National Transportation Exchange (ntx.net) helps shippers to find available capacity on trucks and ranks shipment requests in order of potential profitability.

Erick Schonfeld of *Fortune* magazine believes that VerticalNet, which provides sites for 33 industries, and Chemdex, which matches buyers and sellers of laboratory chemicals, could both go public this year. These offerings could be an interesting show in themselves, he says, but the real spectacle will be watching these high-tech go-betweens drag the industrial economy onto the Net.

All of this has astonishing implications. No large company or in-



dustrial sector will remain untouched by digital commerce. Retailers will inevitably find that they cannot compete on cost. Some of their business will go online. What remains will have to offer the shopper incentives to turn up in person. Bookstores will become coffee houses and meeting places.

Bill Gross, the entrepreneur, is offering to give away \$1,000 PCs in return for the right to display advertising on their screens is just a start. In two or three years the humble PC is expected to be a minority route to accessing the Internet, with the television and telephone direct taking over.

In any case, money will not be made primarily from hardware or software. One of the obvious ways for Internet service providers to go is to move into the database business. They will be able to build up astonishingly detailed profiles of customers: their location, their likes, their dislikes, their spending patterns and incomes. Privacy on the Net is a huge issue and until regulators come up with some kind of consensus, information for marketing purposes will be hot property. This is only a byte-sized example

of a wave of revolutionary change going on that is barely understood by most of us and has barely been tackled by governments. They face problems of privacy law and of regulation of criminal activity (a man from Interpol turned up at a session on regulating cyberspace in Davos). Far more fundamental than these, however, is the question of taxation. If more and more commerce is going online and governments fail to capture the tax revenue from cyberspace that they did in earthly tax districts, they are going to find large and permanent black holes in their tax revenues.

It is assumed that even slimmer state sectors of the future are still going to be paying for such things as education, healthcare and police, but will they be able to afford it without more stringent and effective taxing of e-commerce? The US Administration

has taken the view that the Internet is too important a driver of technological innovation to impose taxes on transactions. It has said that there should be no new taxes beyond what is charged at local or state level, and this, currently, is a patchwork. (For a comprehensive guide to current US states' taxation, go to the Veriex Tax Cybrary on the Net.)

The OECD is working intensively on how to tax cyberspace, which is not easy for the simple reason that nobody is sure where, in earth terms, a transaction has occurred. One suggestion would be to impose a blanket international tax on bytes going through the Internet service providers and then somehow share the revenues between national governments.

If Barings' management found it difficult to control its derivatives traders because it didn't understand what they were up to, how much more of an unequal struggle will it be between technocrats from the Inland Revenue and the techno-wizards driving the growth of the Internet?

Counterfeiters are poised to cash in on arrival of the euro

Urgent action is required to safeguard Europe's new currency, says Jeff Stuart

The euro has been successfully launched and forecasts are that it will become a "reserve" currency alongside the US dollar. This contains the seeds of a serious problem which should be addressed with some urgency: it will be heavily counterfeited.

There is a simple reason for this. First, of course, there is always a lot of counterfeiting about. If you doubt that, just try to spend a £50 note. Even £20 notes are regularly checked, by machines of varying adequacy, in stores, boutiques and bars.

Most counterfeited is the dollar, for obvious reasons: it is conveniently negotiable almost anywhere, it has high denominations and it is a surprisingly simple, two-colour note.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington has only recently upgraded its integral security. While most countries in this century opted to improve the security quality of their banknotes, the US has preferred to spend its money on the FBI. Anti-counterfeiting has always been one of the FBI's main duties. Inside the US, it claims great success. Outside, it is entirely another matter.

There are about 80 billion banknotes produced each year for the 186 currency issuing authorities in 124 countries. Of these, 51 have their own state printing works. Banknotes for the other 135 are produced by 14 privately owned companies. Surprisingly, some of the poorest countries in the world have some of the finest banknotes. Insecure governments can be among the easiest prey to sales pressure from the private companies.

Concern about the security of banknotes, though, is sound sense. After all, they are just scraps of paper. One of the basic economics textbooks (*Benham's Economics*) points out that paper money could be seen "as a gigantic confidence trick". Quite so, but as long as people believe in those little scraps of paper, it all works. That is why counterfeiting is

so deadly. It undermines the confidence in the bits of paper. In 1991 President Mobutu in Zaire introduced a new high-denomination note to pay his soldiers. However, it was rumoured among the soldiers that it was counterfeit currency printed in South America. They went on the rampage, closed down Kinshasa for three days and more than 300 people died. People have to believe in the bits of paper.

Because it is so important to sustain this belief, governments, banks and security forces are notoriously reticent about counterfeiting. From official comments you would think it hardly went on. So why the difficulties spending some notes? Why all the testing machines next to the tills?

The euro will undoubtedly be designed to be one of the most secure currencies in the world. Most of the 11 participating countries have their own state printing works, or an excellent private company, in their territory. So why should it be so vulnerable to counterfeiting? The answer lies in a small document produced by a little-known, non-profit organisation based in Zurich. The Association Internationale des Imprimeurs Fiduciaires (AIIIF). It was founded by the privately owned banknote printers. All 14 such printers in Europe, North America, Canada and South America are members.

The permanent Secretariat organises regular conferences to consider all aspects of security printing. Guest speakers from Interpol, central banks, the FBI and various other organisations attend. Collectively the companies themselves represent the greatest concentration of security printing expertise in the world.

The AIIIF publishes very little, apart from comprehensive internal minutes, papers, etc. But a few years ago it did publish a prestigious small booklet entitled *The Production of Security Documents*. It was an extremely carefully worded affair, which the organisation, with its obsession with secrecy and confidentiality, agonised



Forger's dream: it will take euroland citizens a long time to gain an instinctive feel for the notes

about even producing. It is an extract from this which is directly relevant to the concerns expressed about the euro and counterfeiting.

It reads: "The main aim for all those concerned with the production of security documents is to present to the would-be counterfeiter or forger a number of obstacles to defeat his intentions while at the same time affording the man in the street a simple means of establishing the genuineness of the documents without the aid of technical apparatus."

The struggle to find the "simple means" has intensified as criminals have gained access to new technology, six-colour photocopiers, improved photographic equipment, computer

graphics and more. Inexorably, the need to rely on "the aid of technical apparatus" has become obvious. There are no technical means of validating banknotes on the spot. Any counterfeiter worth his salt will produce something to get past the little machines next to the till.

All the security devices on even the best banknotes can be effectively replicated by commonly available printing and repro machinery. Even holograms are widely available now and can be copied by hot-foil stamping, a commonplace process in the packaging industry. The banks do have machin-

ery capable of validation, but that is a case of closing the stable door after the horse has bolted. By the time it gets to the bank, the note has already been used.

So the real bulwark against counterfeiting is "the man in the street". Millions of them, who instinctively know in most cases, though they may not be able to explain exactly why, that a note is not right. Something about the feel, the colour, the curl, or even the smell. These permanent "validators" have come to know their banknotes over a period of years and have watched them evolve as extra security features have been added to them (few countries totally change all their currency in

one hit). The issuing authorities have to depend on that.

The euro will not have that advantage. It will be completely unfamiliar to 300 million people. It is a pan-national construct, with many of the symbols not easily recognised. The Governments involved will be anxious that it is accepted unquestioningly and used immediately. No one will want to admit to anything untoward to undermine it. It will take the citizens of euroland a year or two before they develop that instinctive feel for the notes.

That is a counterfeiter's heaven. Criminals in Turkey, Russia, Europe, Hong Kong and Latin America are probably already preparing for the launch. Talk of bringing that launch forward from 2002 to 2000 render the problem pressing. Even if it remains at the later date there is still not much time.

But what can be done? First, tell the general public the whole story of the security built into the notes. Educate them. Use newspapers, magazines and television to point out what these features are. The old worry that this is too much of a risk because it "informs" counterfeiter is untenable: counterfeiter will scrutinise the notes under microscopes and light sources to discover all they need to know, if they have not already got the information from their own sources.

The second measure is for the EU to recognise the need for a European "FBI". The obvious step would be an expansion of Interpol. To prevent a large problem in the first few years, a dedicated, well-equipped organisation needs to be in place before launch.

Thirdly, but probably politically unacceptable, severely limit the number of factories where the notes are produced, ideally to one location. Having printing sites all over Europe is a security nightmare.

Whether this all has to be done in three years, or one if the launch is brought forward, someone should be doing something now.

SB chief still haunted by ghost of Glaxo

It's almost enough to drive Jan Leschly to despair — if that were conceivable for SmithKline Beecham's perennially upbeat chief executive.

The pharmaceuticals group yesterday announced a revised strategy, ambitious profit forecasts for the next three years, \$2 billion (£1.2 billion) of disposals that will cut employee numbers by a quarter, a shake-up of manufacturing and purchasing that will save £200 million a year — and its results for 1998.

Yet for many in the London stock market this does not change the single most important issue: the possibility of SB being taken over. Mr Leschly says London is "hung-up" on last year's failed merger with Glaxo Wellcome. The world has moved on: his real concern is keeping pace with fast-growing American companies such as Pfizer and Warner-Lambert. Unfortunately, most of SB's shareholders are in the UK and it is hard to see yesterday's announcements as anything other than a strategic response to the world post-Glaxo.

One rival said: "Jan's had a pretty hard beating from the institutions over the past year. I think they feel they've got to deliver good growth to satisfy their shareholders — otherwise the issue of Glaxo Wellcome would keep emerging to haunt them."

SB is aiming to improve underlying earnings by 13 per cent this year, and to accelerate growth to the mid-to-high teens in 2000 and 2001. Seraxat/Paxil, the £1 billion-a-year anti-depressant, should continue to grow strongly as the group promotes new uses, but much depends on Avandia, a potential diabetes blockbuster scheduled for launch this year.

SB recently bolstered its pipeline by committing \$180 million to acquire a treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, now called Becar. Mr Leschly also has high hopes for Ariflo for emphysema, for an antibiotic called Facive and for Idoxifene for osteoporosis. However, recent launches have not always met expectations.

Closing and selling some of its 67 manufacturing plants around the world will help. SB expects to shed 3,000 jobs as it tackles a legacy from the original SmithKline Beecham/Beecham merger and the acquisition of Sterling Winthrop.

Streamlined manufacturing and new global purchasing agreements are expected to save £200 million, but they will cost £750 million to implement over the next four years. The savings will help SB to feed its ever-hungry research and development machine.

SB will take a £440 million loss on the sale of Diversified Pharmaceutical Services for \$700 million. Ever positive, Mr Leschly said the group had reaped the value from DPS, which manages drug spending on behalf of US employee healthcare plans, but it is hard to see how, Express Scripts, the new owner of DPS, will continue to provide SB with the prescribing information that was one of its principal benefits.

Shorn, too, of Clinical Laboratories, where SB is selling a 70 per cent stake for \$1.025 billion, the group is left with its pharmaceuticals and consumer healthcare, which include Aquafresh, Ribena, Panadol and Lucozade.

Individually, SB's moves all look sensible, though whether it can meet its earnings goals is open to question. Many of the world's leading drug groups are forecast to produce double-digit earnings growth even while they complain about the squeeze on healthcare spending. They cannot all be right.

PAUL DURMAN

Sick joke

A FEW months back, in possibly the most ill-conceived marketing stunt ever, Sony sent out thousands of letters purporting to be the results of urgent medical tests and informing the recipient that these had detected "early stages of a progressive condition".

The spoof "results" were actually plugging the company's computer games. Predictably, a large number were sent to people who really were waiting the results of cancer screening and other serious medical tests and caused immense distress. Sony even ignored warnings from

the Committee of Advertising Practice not to send the letters out. I was told at the time that the matter was under investigation by the Advertising Standards Authority and action would be taken.

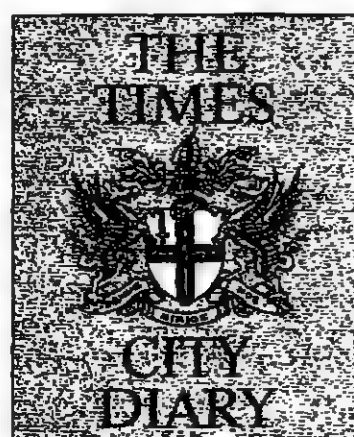
The ASA today publishes its ruling. No fine, not possible, and no severe condemnation — instead Sony is merely told the letters were "unsuitable". An ASA spokesman tells me: "The fact that they have apologised goes a long way as far as we're concerned." So that's all right then.

LEADERS is a glossy management magazine, a sort of corporate Hello! And never underestimate the curse of Hello!, the tendency of its interviewees to come unstuck subsequently.

So the latest issue has a heavy hitter on the front, and lots inside about how he is "going places this year". Anyone tempted to feature next time might note that he is Bernd Pischetsrieder, recently ejected as chief executive of BMW.

On the menu

AN APPEAL to all readers, and perhaps a free lunch. Simpson's in the Strand is being refurbished at a cost of £1.7 million, and the management is installing a historical archive there.



So far they have found lots of old documents, pictures and so on, but there is a shortage of menus.

The oldest anyone can find is from 1913, but there must be others stashed away in old trunks or collections of memorabilia. I have negotiated with Simpson's an exclusive deal; any of you with menus predating this will get lunch there in exchange.

Incidentally, I hear that ever since Simpson's Piccadilly, the department store, closed its doors for the last time, Simpson's — no relation, ever — has received a couple of calls a day asking if it is still trading.

Room & board

THE uncertainty surrounding Elextra Investment Trust has delayed the retirement of its chairman, Michael

Stoddart. The trust was forced to report an unsolicited approach from 3i a couple of weeks ago, and Stoddart will now stick around until the situation is resolved.

The approach has also caused some problems for the forthcoming annual meeting, which should have been followed by Stoddart's retirement. Elextra had hired a small suite at the Howard Hotel, just big enough to accommodate the board, advisers and the handful of shareholders expected. Anyone who turns up there will now be redirected up the road to rather larger premises at the Savoy.

ANY change in ownership can be unsettling for the workforce, admits Gary Ashworth, who built up his recruitment business Abacus by means of frequent acquisitions and then sold it last year. You have to be careful how you announce the news.

He tells Real Business what he believes to be best practice. "The owner simply faced the whole company and said, 'I've sold the business. I then stood up and said, 'Hi, I'm your new boss.'"

Core business

THERE is life after Two Dogs for Richard Purdey, the former chairman of Merrydown, who left the company after a boardroom shake-out last summer. He has reverted to an earlier, gentler calling and is making and selling fruit wines and apple juice from

the company's former off-licence at its home town of Horam, East Sussex. Purdey, who a few years ago returned as chairman of James Purdey & Sons, the gunmaker, even though his family sold the business in 1946, has set up his own company, the aptly named Both Barrels, to market elderberry and other wines and mead.

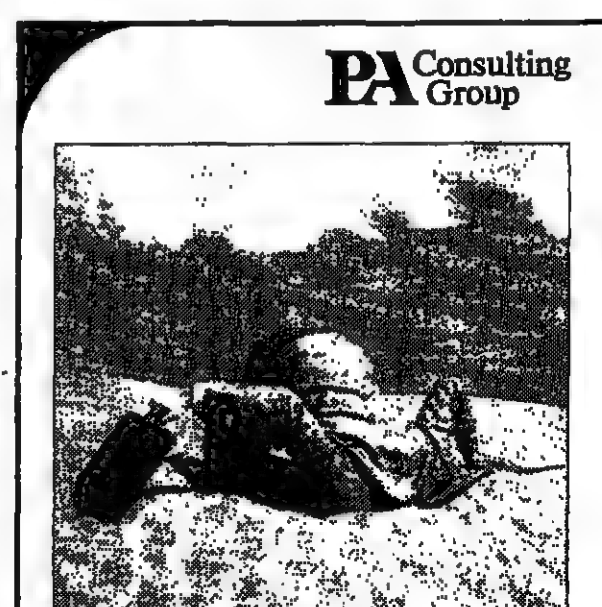
"I used to have a firm about Merrydown fruit wines which I took around Women's Institutes and town guilds," Purdey recalls. "Then, the image was all Arsenic and Old Lace. Thirty five years on, people are far more adventurous."

MARTIN WALLER

citydiary@the-times.co.uk



Purdey: rolling out both barrels



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Tony Dawe introduces a two-page report on the drive to cut down on fuel consumption by making our homes more cost-effective

Why bills are going through the roof

With snow falling across much of Britain this week, the nation's fuel bills will be rising as we all strive to keep warm.

Turning up the central heating, putting more coal on the fire and running fan heaters in the colder parts of the home are all essential as the temperature drops below zero outside. Yet few people realise that they can balance this inevitable increase in their bills with a few economy measures.

Households in Britain are estimated to waste £6.5 billion every year on energy, equivalent to £278 for each household or 100 times the cost of combatting the current cold snap. The estimate comes from the Energy Savings Trust, set up by the Government to promote energy efficiency. Its research also found that most householders are ignorant about the savings they can achieve.

The trust is now trying to get the message across with a series of leaflets, an energy efficiency hotline and website and free do-it-yourself home energy checks. Saving energy in the home will also form part of a new £7 million campaign by the Environment Department.

Eoin Lees, the trust's chief executive, says: "By becoming more energy-efficient, the average household can reduce fuel bills by up to 40 per cent. Our initiative has been created to help to build awareness of the financial and environmental benefits of being wise with energy around the home."

Alan Meale, the Energy Efficiency Minister, believes that simple economies around the home will help the whole environment. "If you burn energy when you don't need to and run water and waste it, you are not only building up extra bills but contributing to the demise of our society," he says.

"We must get the message across that saving energy is common sense, good business practice and costs you less."



Meale: new initiative

"With the help of manufacturers, we have reduced the standby used by appliances on standby for a day from ten to six," Mr Meale says. "With further co-operation and the help of the public, we aim to get the figure down to a single watt."

For more significant savings, the trust reports that an investment of between £250 and £500 could reduce householders' energy bills by up to a quarter. Grants of up to £400 are available.

Condensing boilers, for example, are the most efficient in producing warmth and hot water as they convert an average 85 per cent of fuel into heat. They cost £300 more than an ordinary boiler but an Energy Efficiency grant of £200 will help to reduce the investment, which should save more than £100 a year in fuel bills.

Cavity wall insulation costs an average £550 but a £200 grant is also available to help with the cost of installing it, a measure which the trust claims cuts heat loss by up to 60 per cent and saves a third of fuel costs.

Building societies have discovered that helping borrowers to save money on fuel bills has become a way of attracting business. The Woolwich offers an energy saver mortgage which includes a package of ef-

ficient domestic appliances and energy-saving lightbulbs, while Norwich & Peterborough's green mortgage includes a 1 per cent discount for two years and £1,000 cashback towards home improvements.

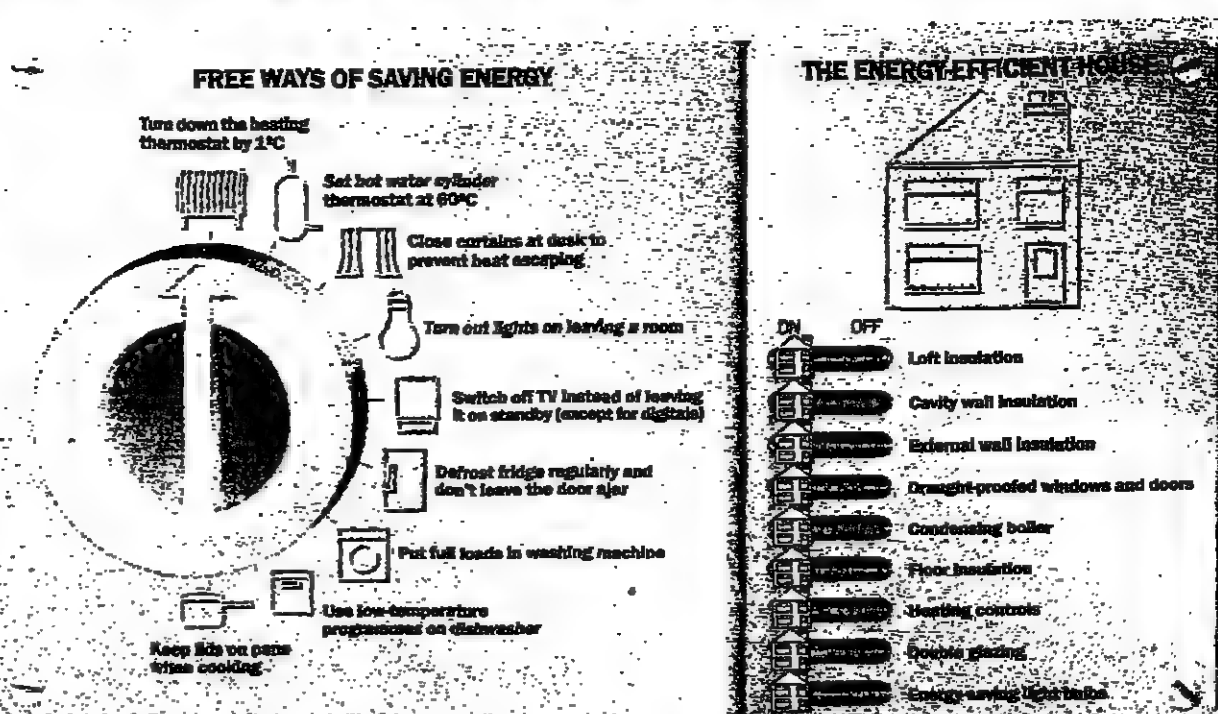
Home Energy Efficiency Scheme grants are also available to people on benefit and have helped to improve nearly three million homes since they were introduced in 1991. "Each household helped has seen its fuel costs reduced by an average of £45 a year, with greater savings for those with cavity wall or loft insulation installed," Mr Meale says.

The minister is concerned, however, that the scheme is not reaching the poorest members of society who cannot afford to heat their homes properly let alone afford efficiency measures, and has launched a new initiative to help them.

"People in the poverty trap burn a lot of fuel because they want to get warm quickly but much of the heat escapes through the roof," he says. "They do not have the choices which other people have. They buy second-hand white goods, which are the least efficient."

As MP for Mansfield in the heart of the Nottinghamshire coalfield, Mr Meale knows how difficult it is to get the efficiency message across. "Many constituents were used to free coal and liked having a fire in the grate all day and feeding the boiler so that could get hot water in the morning," he says. "Now that they are on gas and electricity, they expect the same heat but haven't learnt to use it economically."

Mr Meale regrets that his ministerial lifestyle hardly aids the energy campaign, as he travels by car to keep to a tight timetable. He does his bit at home, however, by building a compost heap with vegetable and garden waste and planting trees to supplement oxygen in the atmosphere.



Save and help the world

Using energy more efficiently has a beneficial effect on global warming as well as our wallets

An eye-catching poster showing a boy and girl jumping for joy beside a block of flats will soon be appearing in our newspapers and on the streets.

A thought bubble in the blue sky above the children proclaims: "This bit of the atmosphere was helped by Mrs Rumney of Carlisle who turns off lights which saves energy and helps fight global warming."

The poster will be part of a £7 million "Are You Doing Your Bit?" campaign by the Environment Department to persuade everyone to do something towards saving fuel and helping the world.

The Energy Saving Trust, set up by the Government to promote energy efficiency, says: "It has never been easier to save money on fuel bills. Do you know, for instance, that in most homes lighting accounts for 10 to 15 per cent of the electricity bill? And what about letterboxes and keyholes? Did you know that they could save you money?"

Alan Meale, the Energy Efficiency Minister, adds: "If we can persuade people to do something as simple as switching off electrical appliances at the mains and buying a long-life lightbulb which lasts for years and uses less wattage, it will get them in the mood to think

about other ways of saving energy and of buying efficient products."

Stroll around the home tonight and identify ten simple measures which cost nothing but could start an energy-saving habit that could save more than £100 a year.

Just drawing the curtains so the heat doesn't escape through the windows can save £15 a year in the average three-bedroom semi-detached house.

Turning out lights on leaving a room and switching off the television instead of leaving it on standby (unless it is a digital TV) are obvious ways of saving a few pounds. Adjusting the heating will achieve more substantial savings.

Turn down the central heating thermostat by 1°C and the fuel bill will be reduced by between £15 and £30 a year. Set the hot water cylinder thermostat at 60°C,

which is quite adequate for bathing and washing, and a similar saving will be achieved. Just making sure the hot water is not running before the plug is put in the basin will save pounds.

'It has never been easier to save money on fuel bills'

It is the kitchen, however, which offers the greatest opportunity for cutting energy costs. Put just enough water for your needs in the kettle instead of filling it to the brim, choose the correct size pan for the food and cooker and keep lids on while cooking and, if you have a dishwasher, run it on a low-temperature programme. The refrigerator can be a real money waster. If you place it next to a cooker or boiler, it will have to work harder.

Don't leave the fridge door open for longer than necessary and defrost it regularly to keep it running efficiently. Both teams on a recent edi-

tion of University Challenge were baffled by the question: if you put cold water or boiling water in the freezer unit, which will freeze first?

The answer is the boiling water because the freezer works harder to cool it down, using a lot of energy in the process. The lesson is to avoid putting hot food straight into the fridge/freezer and allow it to cool first.

Washing machines should always be full for the sake of energy efficiency but, if that is not possible, use the half-load or economy programme. Modern washing powders also work effectively at low temperatures and so further reduce costs.

Consumers may become so pleased at the savings they can achieve for nothing, they may be prepared to spend money to cut costs even further. Energy-saving lightbulbs, an insulating jacket for the hot water tank and seals for exterior doors are all cheap to buy and the extra money will be recouped within months by the amount saved on fuel bills.

Even keyholes and letterboxes can let in draughts and let out heat. Put a cover over the keyhole and fit a nylon brush seal or a spring flap behind the letterbox... but warn the paperboy first.

TONY DAWE

Now green PCs are really cool

The rapid growth in demand for the latest technology has made the energy used by personal computers and other office equipment one of the fastest-growing sources of electricity consumption in businesses and homes.

It accounts for more than 7 per cent of the electricity used in offices in America, yet much of it is wasted because equipment sits idle for long periods throughout the day as well as overnight and at weekends.

To tackle this problem, the US Environmental Protection Agency launched the Energy Star programme in partnership with manufacturers so that consumers could identify energy-efficient products. The mark has become a globally recognised seal of approval for environmentally aware hardware and now appears on products such as monitors, printers and scanners.

Most of the world's largest PC manufacturers are well aware of the financial as well as environmental benefits of supplying "green" computers. IBM has a dedicated Engineering Centre for Environmentally Conscious Products and is discussing ways in which to market more aggressively the environmental aspect of their products to consumers. Compaq, Gateway and most other recognised PC brands are Energy Star partners.

Such computers still vary enormously in their power consumption: some use as little as 1.5 watts in "sleep" mode while others are close to the 30-watt limit. Laptops are the most energy-efficient because they have to survive for long periods using only batteries. Most new desktop computers now have some built-in power-saving measures.

Systems that have been upgraded to include large numbers of components consume the most power. Many conventional PCs have power supplies rated at more than 250 watts and these waste more energy "licking over" than less powerful ones. As most home PCs are seldom upgraded, they could happily run on a power supply of half the size.

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Anything else is a compromise.

Copyright dispute over Dutch building

Pearce v Ove Arup Partnership Ltd and Others

Before Lord Justice Roch, Lord Justice Chadwick and Lord Justice May

[Judgment January 21]

An English court was not required to refuse to entertain a claim in respect of alleged infringements of Dutch copyright on the basis that the infringements were not actionable in Dutch law.

The Court of Appeal so stated in a reserved judgment when dismissing an application by Caruth Pearce to adduce further evidence, but allowing his appeal against a decision of Mr Justice Lloyd (The Times March 17, 1997; [1997] Ch 293).

Mr Pearce had complained of breaches of what he claimed to be his copyright as author of drawings created when an architectural student for a town hall in Docklands which was never built.

He claimed that Mr Rem Koolhaas, an architect, and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture, of which he was director, had copied his drawings and used them in substantial part in designing the Kunsthal in Rotterdam, Ove Arup Partnership Ltd was the civil engineering firm retained for construction of the Kunsthal, owned by the city of Rotterdam.

The judge had decided to strike out allegations of infringement of Dutch copyright on the ground that they were not justiciable under English law, but accepted that on the facts alleged the claim was bound to fail and struck out his whole claim against Ove Arup, Mr Koolhaas, Office for Metropolitan Architecture and the city of Rotterdam, Mr Pearce appealed.

Mr Koolhaas, OMA and Rotterdam by respondents' notice, contended that the judge's order should be affirmed on the additional ground that the alleged infringements of Dutch copyright against them were not actionable in English law.

Miss Julia Clark for Mr Pearce, Ms Heather Lawrence for the first defendant, Mr Christopher Floyd QC and Mr Richard Hanco for the second to fourth defendants.

LORD JUSTICE ROCH, giving the judgment of the court, said that the first issue was abuse of process. In striking out the plaintiffs

claim on the basis that it was speculative, the judge in essence decided that the claim was bound to fail because no court could ever be persuaded to draw the necessary inference that copies had been made.

The plaintiffs applied to adduce further evidence before their Lordships including a portfolio of 18 pairs of drawings, each pair with part of the Docklands drawings overlaid with a transparency of an allegedly comparable part of the Kunsthal drawings.

That application, subject to one gloss, would be refused as the evidence was, or could readily have been, available for the hearing before Mr Justice Lloyd.

The gloss was that their Lordships considered Mr Pearce's portfolio of drawings was receivable, not as additional evidence, but as an explanation of counsel's submissions on his behalf for which leave was not needed.

The portfolio was a clear and helpful forensic aid to the understanding of the plaintiffs' case which had put the court at an advantage over Mr Justice Lloyd who had to struggle with the greater difficulty of comparing annotated plans.

It was not usually possible to allege copying either than a deduction by inference from all the surrounding circumstances: *Copyright and Stone James on Copyright* (13th edition 1991) p169.

In their Lordships' judgment, the judge was not right to conclude that the inferences necessary for the plaintiffs' case to succeed could never be drawn. The plaintiffs' allegations of similarity were not so fanciful that his claim as a whole should be regarded as speculative.

The respondents contended that nevertheless the judge's order should be affirmed on the ground that the infringements of Dutch copyright alleged against them were not actionable in English law.

Actionability
The relevant inquiry was whether English law permitted the English court, in the present context, to entertain a claim based on the infringement, by acts done in Holland, of a local right conferred in Holland by Dutch law.

That inquiry had to be answered by reference to English private international law rules; in particular,

by reference to those rules which, in the light of the provisions of the Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1982 and the Conventions which, by section 2(1) of that Act, had the force of law in the UK, governed the resolution of disputes in civil and commercial matters between persons domiciled in the contracting states party to those Conventions.

It was accepted that the English court had jurisdiction against all the defendants: see articles 2 and 6(1) of the Convention on Jurisdiction and the Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters, signed at Brussels in 1968.

Nevertheless, it was submitted that jurisdiction was one thing; justiciability or actionability another. It was not enough for the plaintiff to establish that he could bring proceedings against the defendants in the English court.

Where the wrong of which he complained had been committed outside England, he had also to establish that the English court, applying its own conflict of laws rules, would regard his complaint as giving rise to a cause of action that it would recognise and entertain.

The judge accepted that, but for the Brussels Convention, an action in the English court which was founded on an alleged breach of Dutch copyright law had to be struck out as not justiciable on one or both of two grounds:

First, because the rule in *British South Africa Company v The Companhia de Mocimboa* (1893) AC 602 required that a claim for breach of a foreign statutory intellectual property right must be regarded as local and so could not be entertained by an English court.

Second, because such a claim could not satisfy the double-actionability rule derived from *Phillips v Eyre* (1870) LR 6 QB 1.

But he was satisfied that to apply those rules in a case where the English court was given jurisdiction by articles 2 and 6(1) of the Brussels Convention would be inconsistent with, and would impair the effectiveness of, the Convention; with the consequence that the English conflict of laws rules had to be regarded as overridden by the Convention in such a case and so inapplicable.

Non-justiciability under the Mocimboa rule

On its face, their Lordships found that the rule in the *Mocimboa* case did not provide self-evident support for the proposition that a claim for breach of a foreign statutory intellectual property right could not be entertained by an English court.

The case was considered in *Hesperides Hotels v Aegean Turkish Holidays Ltd* (1979) AC 508 and in *Tyburn Productions Ltd v Conan Doyle* (1991) Ch 75.

The issue identified in *Tyburn* was whether or not the distinction between transitory and local actions was fundamental to the decision in the *Mocimboa* case.

It was necessary to understand what the distinction between local and transitory actions was. From an analysis of the reasoning in the *Mocimboa* case it was clear that the question whether the English courts should entertain an action for trespass to foreign land was treated as one of justiciability.

The English courts should not claim jurisdiction to adjudicate on matters which, under generally accepted principles of private international law, were within the peculiar province and competence of another state.

Their Lordships were satisfied that, at least in relation to land situated within a contracting state, there was now no longer any basis for the rule in the *Mocimboa* case.

The English courts should not claim jurisdiction to adjudicate on matters which, under generally accepted principles of private international law, were within the peculiar province and competence of another state.

Their Lordships considered of limited assistance the Australian case of *Potter v Broken Hill Pty Co Ltd* (1906) 3 CLR 479 and *Norbert Szelebach and Son Ltd v Misch* (1960-1) 105 CLR 449.

Of the English cases, their Lordships found that the respondents could gain no assistance from *De Legg Music v Stuart-Brown* (1986) RPC 273.

Tyburn was the only decision that could be said to provide direct support for the proposition that a claim for breach, outside England, of a foreign intellectual property right could not be entertained by

an English court. That case concerned the existence or validity of the right itself.

Their Lordships could derive little or no assistance on the question whether an action for alleged infringement of a foreign copyright by acts done outside the UK, in a case where, as here, the existence and validity of the rights was not in issue, was justiciable in an English court; and no assistance from that case where the question arose in the context of acts done in a contracting state.

Their Lordships also rejected the submission that by article 5(2) of the Berne Convention the provisions of the Brussels Convention were excluded from application to copyright infringement.

Requirement of double-actionability

The respondents relied on the rule derived from *Phillips v Eyre* and *Boys v Chaplin* (1971) AC 359. For the rule and its exception see *Diop and Morris on Conflict of Laws* (12th edition 1993) p1487.

Their Lordships found that the case was not one in which the claim was in respect of some wrong which was conceptually unknown in English law. It was a case where, if the claim was justiciable in the exception to the double-actionability rule, the claim was an English court to apply Dutch law; and the English court ought to do so.

That view accorded with the policy frequently adopted by the court when construing section 11 of the Private International Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995.

Conclusion

Their Lordships were satisfied that the *Mocimboa* rule did not require the English court to refuse to entertain a claim in respect of the alleged infringement of Dutch copyright; and that, in those circumstances, the court was not required by the first limb of the double-actionability rule to hold that the claim was bound to fail because the acts done in Holland could not amount to an infringement of UK copyright.

It followed that their Lordships were not persuaded that the judge's order should be affirmed on the alternative ground in the respondents' notice.

Solicitors: Landau & Cohen; Benymans Lane Mawer; Ashurst Morris Crisp.

Performing Rights Society v Bozot

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Sedley

[Judgment February 2]

A hotel or restaurant with a licence to perform music from the repertoire of the Performing Rights Society was required to pay royalties under that licence calculated at 4 per cent of the cost of the performance. The rate was calculated on actual gross expenditure in respect of the provision of any music by performers, not on the amount of copyright music played.

The Court of Appeal so held, dismissing the appeal of the defendant, Mr Peter Bozot, against the decision of Judge Cresswell in *West London County Council v The Performing Rights Society*.

Mr Stephen Bate for Mr Bozot, Miss Mary Victoria, QC and Mr Bernard Lalonde for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS said that the society was a licensing body as defined by section 16 of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. It administered the performing rights in musical works on behalf of its members and represented many foreign music copyright owners.

In order for anybody who wished to perform a musical work in public required a licence from the society. Such licences were available to those who applied and provided income which, in 1997, exceeded £19,000,000 which the society distributed to its members after deduction of expenses.

The society organised and made available to prospective users blank licences which authorised the user to make use of the society's repertoire.

Mr Bozot appealed only against the dismissal of the counterclaim in which he sought two declarations as to the meaning of the society's licence subject to the HR tariff.

Mr Bozot contended that under the licence he needed to pay only 4 per cent of his expenditure in providing performance of works the

subject of the society's repertoire and that when calculating the amount due, provision should be made for the time when music was not being performed and when the repertoire was not being used.

His Lordship could not accept Mr Bozot's submissions. The licence granted in clause 1 was to use the society's repertoire. The royalties were calculated in accordance with the HR tariff.

Section 4.1.1 of that tariff on royalty rates for featured music had to be read with the definitions in section 7. When so read it was quite unambiguous.

If an establishment used the society's repertoire it needed a licence which was a blanket licence covering the whole repertoire. The sum payable was calculated by reference to expenditure on performers, not by reference to the amount of use made of the society's repertoire.

It was paying for use of the repertoire with the rate calculated in a particular way. Whether or not the manner of calculation was reasonable was within the sole jurisdiction of the Copyright Tribunal.

Section 4 of the tariff set the royalty rate for music users in respect of musical performances. Section 4.1.1 did not refer to copyright music within the society's repertoire, but generally to "music by performers".

The word "music" was unqualified and therefore meant any music in contrast to music within the society's repertoire. It was clear in section 4.1.1 that the rate was calculated on gross expenditure not on the amount of copyright music used.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Sedley agreed.

Solicitors: Polkeworth & Barratt, Bishop's Stortford; Maidstones.

Starting point for multiplier based on life expectancy

Worrall v Powergen plc
Before Mr David Foskett, QC [Judgment November 17]

When determining a multiplier based on the life expectancy of a plaintiff in a personal injury action, the court should use as a starting-point tables 11 to 20 of the "Ogden Tables" published by the Government Actuary's Department.

Mr David Foskett, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division in the Birmingham District Registry, so stated when ruling, inter alia, on an issue relating to damages to be paid by the defendant, Powergen plc, to the plaintiff, Frances Worrall, widow and executrix of the estate of Leslie Worrall, deceased, in respect of claims made under the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1964 and the Fatal Accidents Act 1967.

Mr Frank Burnes, QC, for the plaintiff, Miss Jayne Adams for the defendant.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the defendant had admitted liability for the death at the age of 64 years and 5 months, of the plaintiff's husband.

Both parties agreed that the correct starting-point was with the *Actuarial Tables with Explanatory Notes for Use in Personal Injury and Fatal Accidents Cases* issued from time to time by the Government Actuary's Department, and known as "Ogden Tables".

Use of those tables was endorsed by the House of Lords in *Wells v Wells* [1998] 3 WLR 329, 347, where Lord Lloyd of Berwick stated that "the tables should now be regarded as the starting-point, rather than a check".

The dispute was whether table 1 should be used, as the defendant contended, or table 11, as the plaintiff contended.

Both provided multipliers for pecuniary loss for life, for males, but were based on different mortality assumptions, described in paragraphs 5 to 7 of the explanatory notes to the Ogden Tables (third edition 1998).

For the appellant, Mr Marcus Thompson for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE TUCKER, giving the judgment of the court, said that the defendant had admitted liability for the death of the plaintiff's husband on conditional bail, the condition being one of residence, for a trial concerning a single count of robbery.

On January 21 the jury were unable to reach a verdict and were discharged. On the first occasion, on January 19, the appellant turned up late and the judge gave him a severe warning and said that if he was late the next day it would be regarded as an offence.

In spite of that the appellant was 20 minutes late the next day, by which time the judge had revoked his bail and indicated that it would be treated as a contempt of court.

When the appellant did appear his counsel's requests for further time to consider the position re-

garding the alleged contempt were refused. After further exchanges the appellant was sentenced.

It was apparent from sections 3(1) and 6 of the 1976 Act that if the appellant had committed any offence it was one contrary to section 6, and once the offence was established the method of punishment was established by section 6(3).

That subsection did not convert an offence under the Act to a contempt of court, but provided an alternative method of dealing with it. If followed that the judge was not entitled to deal with the matter as a contempt of court.

In the circumstances, their Lordships would not consider whether to substitute a conviction under section 6 of the Act, nor would they decide whether it would be possible to do so.

Solicitors: Russell Jones & Walker, Birmingham; Dibb Lupton Alsop, Birmingham.

Sentencing as if for contempt

Regina v Lubega

Before Lord Justice Swinton Thomas, Mr Justice Tucker and Mr Justice Fennel-Davies

[Judgment February 11]

Section 6(3) of the Bail Act 1976, under which an offender "shall be punishable either on summary conviction or as if it were a criminal contempt of court", did not have the effect of converting an offence under the Act to a contempt of court. It provided a speedy and effective alternative method of dealing with such an offence.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so stated when allowing an appeal by Thomas Lubega and another, convicted on January 20, 1999 at Wood Green Crown Court, before Judge Finney, of being in contempt of court, for which he was sentenced to 28 days imprisonment.

Mr Simon Wilshire, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals,

for the appellant, Mr Marcus Thompson for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE TUCKER, giving the judgment of the court, said that the defendant had admitted liability for the death of the plaintiff's husband on conditional bail, the condition being one of residence, for a trial concerning a single count of robbery.

On January 21 the jury were unable to reach a verdict and were discharged. On the first occasion, on January 19, the appellant turned up late and the judge gave him a severe warning and said that if he was late the next day it would be regarded as an offence.

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That subsection did not convert an offence under the Act to a contempt of court, but provided an alternative method of dealing with it. If followed that the judge was not entitled to deal with the matter as a contempt of court.

In the circumstances, their Lordships would not consider whether to substitute a conviction under section 6 of the Act, nor would they decide whether it would be possible to do so.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Highgate.

Effect of matrimonial award on insolvency deal

In re M (a debtor) (488-10 of 1996)

Before Sir John Vinelott

[Judgment November 12]

A wife who had received a lump sum under an order in ancillary relief proceedings was bound to accept a dividend under an individual voluntary arrangement. However, in order to prevent unfair prejudice to the wife, her special position as a creditor within section 28(1) of the Insolvency Act 1986 had to be recognised.

Sir John Vinelott so held, sitting as an additional judge of the Chan-

cery Division, when allowing an appeal by P against Mr Registrar Bister's refusal to allow an extension of time for making an application under section 262 of the 1986 Act. In making her application under section 262, P had sought relief from an individual voluntary arrangement entered into by the M. the respondent.

Section 281 provides: "(3) discharge (from bankruptcy debt) does not... release the bankrupt from any debt which... (b) arises from any order made in family proceedings...".

Miss Ansharad Start for the ap-

pellant, Ms Marcia Shekardemian for the respondent.

HIS LORDSHIP said that P and M were married in 1990. In about 1995, P commenced divorce proceedings and received an order by way of ancillary relief that M should transfer his interest in the matrimonial home to appellant and pay her the sum of £20,000.

M subsequently applied for an interim order under sections 252 and 253 of the 1986 Act so that an individual voluntary arrangement could be considered by his creditors. P's claim was by their £24,962,

the £20,000 plus the taxed costs incurred in the matrimonial proceedings. The proposal was approved by the requisite majority, with only P, who stood to recover less than 4 per cent of her claim, voting against.

On March 13, 1998, Mr Registrar Bister refused to allow P's application, inter alia, for an extension of time for making an application under section 262 of the 1986 Act. It was from that decision that P appealed.

His Lordship said that the first question he had to address was whether P was bound by the indi-

vidual voluntary arrangement in respect of the lump sum payable in ancillary proceedings.

Citing *In re Bradley-Hale (a Bankrupt)* [1995] 1 WLR 1970 with approval, his Lordship said that a wife entitled to a matrimonial debt was a creditor within section 257 and was entitled to a notice of a meeting to consider and capable of being bound by a voluntary arrangement.

On the question of whether P had been unfairly prejudiced by the individual voluntary arrangement for the purposes of section 262, his Lordship said that P had the right under section 281(3) of the 1986 Act to be treated by creditors as a creditor in a matrimonial debt, notwithstanding bankruptcy. To the extent that she was compelled by the terms of the voluntary arrangement to accept a dividend in satisfaction of the matrimonial debt, that right was overridden and so she was thereby unfairly prejudiced.

In his Lordship's judgment, the terms of an individual voluntary arrangement would unfairly prejudice a creditor such as P unless her special position was recognised or unless the other creditors were in agreement.

His Lordship considered whether P had an alternative remedy. P was impleading the bona fides of the arrangement accordingly it was contended that she could present a bankruptcy petition under sections 264(1)(b) and 276(1)(b). Nevertheless, the distinction between the distinction in *Russell v Russell* (unreported July 16, 1996) his Lordship held that P had no financial interest in presenting a petition and it would have no prospect of success.

Accordingly, in so far as P relied on sections 264(1) and 276(1), the proper course for challenging the bona fides of the arrangement lay in rule 5.17(5) of the Insolvency Rules (SI 1986 No 1925).

Solicitors: Lawrence Tuckers, Bristol; L. Bingham & Co.

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NO. 1007 OF 1998
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 27th January 1999 concerning the reduction of the capital of the above-named Company from £350,000.00 to £250.00 and the Minutes approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the Company as altered, the several particulars required by the above mentioned Act are registered by the Registrar of Companies on 26th day of January 1999. DATED this 1st day of February 1999. (Signed) T. A. Taylor, 1 Roper Street, Bedford MK43 1FF. (Tel: 01235 256 340). Solicitors for the above named Company.

YORKSHIRE LIMITED HAS THIS EMPLOYMENT A GAIL
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 98 of the Employment Act 1996, that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the above-named Company will be held at 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LY on 22nd February 1999 at 1.30pm for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. Notice is also hereby given, pursuant to Section 190(2A) of the Insolvency Act 1986, that Peter Gordon of Messrs. Beggles Thayer Quincey Taylor Gordon & Fry, The Old Exchange, 284 Southwark Road, Southwark, London, SE1 2UG is qualified to act as an Insolvency Practitioner in relation to the above company, and will furnish creditors, free of charge, with such information concerning the company's affairs as they may reasonably require. Resolutions to be taken at the aforementioned meeting may include a resolution authorising the directors to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company. Dated the 2nd February 1999. (Signed) Peter Gordon, Director.

LANACO LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 98 of the Employment Act 1996, that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the above-named Company will be held at 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LY on 22nd February 1999 at 1.30pm for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. Notice is also hereby given, pursuant to Section 190(2A) of the Insolvency Act 1986, that Peter Gordon of Messrs. Beggles Thayer Quincey Taylor Gordon & Fry, The Old Exchange, 284 Southwark Road, Southwark, London, SE1 2UG is qualified to act as an Insolvency Practitioner in relation to the above company, and will furnish creditors, free of charge, with such information concerning the company's affairs as they may reasonably require. Resolutions to be taken at the aforementioned meeting may include a resolution authorising the directors to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company. Dated the 2nd February 1999. (Signed) Peter Gordon, Director.

Case No. 007422/98
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF HARTFORD GROUP PLC
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 27th January 1999 concerning the reduction of the capital of the Company from £1,250,000 to £1,175,000 and the Minutes approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the Company as altered, the several particulars required by the above mentioned Act are registered by the Registrar of Companies on 5th February 1999. DATED this February 1999. (Signed) T. A. Taylor, 1 Roper Street, Bedford MK43 1FF. (Tel: 01235 256 340). Solicitors for the above named Company.

P. PLASTICS (CHRYSLER) LIMITED
Registered: 007422/98
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Section 98 of the Employment Act 1996, that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the above-named Company will be held at 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LY on 22nd February 1999 at 1.30pm for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. Notice is also hereby given, pursuant to Section 190(2A) of the Insolvency Act 1986, that Peter Gordon of Messrs. Beggles Thayer Quincey Taylor Gordon & Fry, The Old Exchange, 284 Southwark Road, Southwark, London, SE1 2UG is qualified to act as an Insolvency Practitioner in relation to the above company, and will furnish creditors, free of charge, with such information concerning the company's affairs as they may reasonably require. Resolutions to be taken at the aforementioned meeting may include a resolution authorising the directors to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company, and to do all such acts and things as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the directors in relation to the company. Dated the 2nd February 1999. (Signed) Peter Gordon, Director.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS
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REFERENCE: 007422/98
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CHRY-1610<



GALLERIES
Is this man
the future of
British art?
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THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE
Copenhagen
comes into
the West End
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Scatting with the enemy

**Jazz singers are
boldly crossing
over into pop
territory. Clive
Davis applauds**

Last year the whole world — Michael Tilton, Thomas, Cliff Richard and all — queued up to celebrate George Gershwin's centenary. And rightly so. In the jazz realm, on the other hand, every year is a Gershwin centenary. His melodies run through the core of the repertoire, forming a musical DNA in blue. Tonight, as on every other night, someone somewhere will be scatting a chorus of *Fascinating Rhythm* or turning the lights down low with *The Man I Love*.

Without the artistry of jazz singers, many of the tunes we now think of as classics might have survived only as period-pieces. Countless listeners have been won over to the work of Kern, Porter and Berlin not by extravagant Broadway revivals but by Ella Fitzgerald's timeless series of *Songbook* albums.

Even though Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Carmen McRae have passed on, the Nineties are a good time in which to hear standards in many guises. Once neglected artists such as the ultra-laid-back American, Shirley Horn, have enjoyed a professional re-birth. The Canadian newcomer Diana Krall has justifiably won acclaim for her Nat Cole-inspired trio. New York cabaret diva Mary Cleere Haran regularly attracts full houses here with her sophisticated and wistful shows. And next month (March 11) another American, Michael Feinstein, brings his own winning blend of archivist's enthusiasm and pianistic skill to the Barbican.

But if the past is in safe hands, the music of the present occupies a more ambiguous position. You can hardly put all the blame on the jazz singers. Given the choice between *Someone To Watch Over Me* or an anthem from *Whistle Down The Wind*, it is fair to assume that they will choose the oldie every time.

The changing face of the pop industry has played its part too. With the rise of the singer-songwriter the nature of popular song has changed dramatically. Instead of the elegantly structured 32-bar products of Tin Pan Alley, tunes have grown more personal and more direct. The rhythmic and verbal subtleties on which jazz singers thrive are often conspicuously absent.

But not always. The distinctive albums that Claire Martin has released have furnished a rich example of what a discerning vocalist can achieve with the addition of contemporary material. Whether covering



Claire Martin: "Modern songs speak to me more directly than standards. I want my records slipped in with k.d. lang's, not lost behind Carmen McRae's"

Tom Waits's *Old Friends* or Laura Nyro's *Buy and Sell*, the London-born vocalist has shown how much can be gained by looking beyond the tried and tested.

Martin has not deserted the jazz camp entirely. You still hear her at concerts with the BBC Big Band. But her new album *Take My Heart* (released on Monday by Linn) finds her moving even further into "enemy territory". Her producer Paul Stacey has sculpted a glossier pop backdrop. A side-man with Oasis, he has even persuaded Noel Gallagher to bring his acoustic guitar along for the gentle, courtierified version of the Beatles' *Help!*.

Martin realises she may annoy jazz traditionalists, but she sees nothing wrong in seeking inspiration beyond the authorised canon. "It's a myth that the new songs aren't out there," she says. "You've only got to hear people like Phoebe Snow, Elvis Costello and Joni Mitchell to know that good stuff is still being written."

"I love standards, but modern songs speak to me more directly. Language has changed. So have relationships. A songwriter today is bound to be different from Rodgers and Hammerstein. If you say you're happy and gay now it has a different meaning."

Ironically, she points to Krall's success as a prime reason for the contemporary mood of *Take My Heart*. "She's lovely, but it made me realise I didn't want to go down that road. I want my records to be slipped in with k.d. lang instead of being lost behind Carmen McRae's."

This spring Martin will be on the road singing Burt Bacharach with Ian Shaw, another R&B-influenced jazz singer who enjoys wandering off the beaten path. Shaw, who has been winning over those Americans who think all Brits sound like Julie Andrews, has a new album of his own out shortly. The lyrics of the title tune, *In A New York Minute*, come from the pen of the expatriate writer Fran Landesman. Other less than conventional

tracks include soul singer Bill Withers's *Grandma's Hands*. Shaw cites Shaun Colvin and the late Jeff Buckley as two outstanding members of the new wave of songwriters. And although he feels that new tunes "have to breathe for a year or so" before he is ready to tackle them, he has his eye on a song from the last Portishead disc. As the producer Bob Belden wrote in *Downbeat* magazine during a discussion of musicians' crossover tastes: "Jazz musicians have adapted pop material since they thought they could get away with it — except now."

There is always the danger that if artists chase a bigger audience they will end up compromising their values and creating glib fillers that satisfy neither camp. And pessimists would argue that jazz and pop have grown so far apart over

the last 30 years that no common ground exists any more. Like anyone else, Ella Fitzgerald made some sub-standard albums, but you cannot imagine that she would ever have got round to adding *Like A Virgin* to her programme.

But there could well be many potential jazz fans waiting to be won over by a singer who connects with their own tastes. Cassandra Wilson, for one, has achieved success with folk-inspired recordings that weave together sources as diverse as U2, Joni Mitchell and bluesman Robert Johnson.

Instrumentalists continue to seek the unexpected, too. Pianist Brad Mehldau won praise for his album *Songs by mixing* evergreens with *Riverman* by cult singer-songwriter Nick Drake. The same number opens Claire Martin's album. Brave minds think alike.

Axes bold as love

As some forecasters say, rock's tide is turning back towards American guitar bands. It will be a belated bonus for Madder Rose. The New York group has endured a switchback career since forming in 1991, with a spell in the next-big-thing enclosure followed by a fallow period.

Fears of their demise have been allayed through the good offices of the independent London label Cooking Vinyl, which two weeks ago released *Tragic Magic*, Madder Rose's splendid 1997 album. Previously only granted release in America and Japan, it now contains two new songs as an appetiser for their next mainstream release.

But the crowd that filled the Garage clearly had fond memories of the band's formative years. *Car Song* was an early reminder of the fetching juxtaposition of Billy Cote's distinctive guitar shapes and Mary Lorson's crystalline vocals. Indeed, for much of the set the armoured tank of Cote's axe effects was a deceptive cover for the baby driver sitting inside gently steering the melodies.

In their quieter moments, they exuded some of the delicate intensity of the Cowboy Junkies. Lorson's breezy tones making her a less mercurial version of the Junkies' Margo Timmins. *Jailbird*, one of the new tracks on *Tragic Magic*, boasted a killer guitar motif from Cote that waited through the piece like a twang from the Old West. On the other, *Narco*, live limitations prevented them from fully recreating the dreamy harmonies of the recorded version, but it still sounded like a group taking ever bolder steps away from base camp.

There is no whiff of trumped-up theatricality

about Madder Rose, and they closed the set proper with the decidedly downbeat, even lugubrious *Don Greene*. For the encore, it was a shame that

they were hamstrung by something as mundane as a broken string, and all momentum was lost as Lorson made a drawn-out but unsuccessful attempt at returning. In the end, she cast the offending instrument aside for a hands-free version of their early single *Beautiful John*, and sounded just fine anyway.

PAUL SEXTON

Dot commerce

WHILE the Internet is often talked up as a way for new acts to bypass traditional record company channels of distribution, it is also proving an invaluable marketing tool for older acts that have become marginalised by the mainstream media.

Judie Tzuke, who has had unsatisfactory experiences with six labels since her first hit 20 years ago, has found her needs best catered for by setting up her own Big Moon record company and selling her last three albums exclusively via her website (www.tzuke.com) and by mail order.

The strategy seems to be working. The singer was enthusiastically greeted by 1,000 or so devotees at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Rather like an English version of Stevie Nicks, Tzuke's commanding stage presence was both open-hearted and carefully self-contained. At 42 the long, honey-blond curls remain untamed and the voice has lost none of its cool, plaintive appeal.

The somewhat restrained tone of the first set was established with a string of songs in a classic soft-rock mould.

Tzuke, meanwhile, sang with her customary poise and grace, her voice an instrument of icy allure, whether negotiating the siren-charm melody of *Stay With Me Till Dawn*, the stark, Gothic harmonies of *Mother* or the more lighthearted mood of *One Day I Will Live in France*.

DAVID SINCLAIR

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

SARAH SMART

Age 21.

Profession: Actress.

Criminal record: She made a strong impression on TV critics in January's *Trial By Jury*, the BBC2 drama in which real-life barristers and jurors try fictional cases, with actors as the defendants and witnesses.

A tough job? Playing a teenager giving evidence against the "wide-boy" father accused of murdering her mother was "the most nerve-racking" day of her life. "I didn't know what the QCs were going to ask me, so when I was in the witness box I was improvising. But I knew that everything I said would be broadcast."

Junior veteran: For roles like this, and Clara, the hero's mother, in a forthcoming small-screen adaptation of *David Copperfield*, she draws on a stock of experience obtained in children's television. "I started off at Central's Junior Television Workshop, in Birmingham, when I was ten. Colin Edwards, the leader of the group, was a major influence."

School daze: Much of her education took place during filming. "Whenever I wasn't needed on location I had to go back to a camper van and work with a tutor."

Sister act: She is moving from Birmingham to London to share a flat with her two sisters, Donna, 20, and Suzie, 18, who are also actresses. "Donna and I played Brummie twins in a BBC Christmas drama ten years ago. It'd be great to get the three of us in the same show."

Weirdest moments? In the early Nineties she was one of the leads in *Woof*, a Baffa-nominated children's series about a boy who periodically turns into a dog. "Adults enjoyed the show and several stopped me in the street and asked: 'Does that boy really turn into a dog?'"

Targets? "More period stuff, because I love the style of acting, and more high-profile series like *Bliss* [in which she played the daughter of genetic scientist Simon Shepherd]. I'd love a really ballsy part."

Self-criticism: "When I look at a finished programme for the first time I find myself repeating all my facial expressions. If anyone watched me watching myself they'd think I was crazy."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

Lambeth

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	40,000 up to 200,000	6.75%	6.50%	5.20%
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	£20,000 up to £40,000	8.40%	8.15%	6.92%
	£40,000 up to £200,000	8.90%	8.65%	7.32%
REGENT/REGAL	min £500 up to £2,500	1.55%	1.30%	1.04%
	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.25%	2.00%	1.60%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	2.15%	1.90%	1.50%
	£10,000 up to £30,000	3.90%	3.65%	2.92%
	£30,000 up to £150,000	4.05%	3.80%	3.04%
BOUNTY SHARES	min £500 up to £2,500	2.35%	2.10%	1.67%
	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.75%	2.50%	1.99%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	3.55%	3.30%	2.68%
	£10,000 up to £30,000	4.25%	4.00%	3.25%
	£30,000 up to £50,000	4.65%	4.40%	3.59%
	£50,000 up to £200,000	5.60%	5.35%	4.22%
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	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.40%	2.15%	1.72%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	3.10%	2.85%	2.28%
	£10,000 up to £30,000	4.00%	3.75%	3.00%
	£30,000 up to £200,000	4.45%	4.20%	3.36%
PREMIUM	min £500 up to £2,500	1.65%	1.40%	1.12%
	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.55%	2.30%	1.79%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	3.25%	3.00%	2.38%
	£10,000 up to £20,000	4.20%	3.95%	3.13%
	£20,000 up to £30,000	4.65%	4.40%	3.59%
	£30,000 up to £40,000	4.70%	4.45%	3.62%
	£40,000 up to £200,000	5.20%	4.95%	3.91%
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	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.35%	2.10%	1.67%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	2.75%	2.50%	1.98%
	£10,000 up to £30,000	3.95%	3.70%	2.92%
	£30,000 up to £200,000	3.75%	3.50%	2.70%
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	£10,000 up to £20,000	6.05%	5.80%	4.64%
	£20,000 up to £40,000	6.75%	6.50%	4.90%
	£40,000 up to £200,000	6.45%	6.20%	4.98%
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BOUNTY DEPOSITS	min £500 up to £2,500	0.40%	0.50%	0.40%
	£2,500 up to £5,000	2.35%	2.10%	1.68%
	£5,000 up to £10,000	2.75%	2.50%	2.00%
	£10,000 up to £20,000	3.65%	3.40%	2.68%
	£20,000 up to £30,000	4.35%	4.10%	3.28%
	£30,000 up to £50,000	4.85%	4.60%	3.69%
	£50,000 up to £200,000	5.60%	5.35%	4.28%

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GALLERIES

The rise of McQueen

ARTS

MUSIC

Last year's songs

Films that are all about Steve

VISUAL ART: Like his namesake, the artist Steve McQueen risks life and limb for his latest films, now at the ICA. Richard Cork reports

Steve McQueen is building a 70ft brick wall when I meet him at the ICA, where his keenly awaited one-man show has just opened. Spanning the entire length of the narrow Concourse Gallery, always an awkward place to display art, the wall transforms the space with its forbidding bulk. McQueen mounts a ladder and begins placing pieces of smashed glass in fresh cement along the top.

"I'm hoping that the wall will be scribbled on," he says with a subversive smile. "If it's not covered in graffiti by the end of the show, I'll be disappointed." Visitors to McQueen's show can also spin themselves into queasiness on his sculptural chrome funfair roundabout. But McQueen's light-headedness does not entirely mask the tension he feels, staging his first major British exhibition of films, sculpture and photography. Shown extensively abroad since his debut in a mixed ICA survey in 1995, the ebullient 29-year-old is already widely regarded as an outstanding young artist. So far, however, McQueen has enjoyed greater acclaim abroad than in his native London. "I get a better response in the US," he admits. "maybe because black artists

are more noticeable over there and gain a broader acceptance."

Talking about his student years, McQueen soon makes clear that it was a difficult period. At Chelsea School of Art, he painted and "did a lot of drawing, but they didn't have any equipment for film". Even at post-seeing Goldsmiths College, where he went on to study in the early 1990s, he had to "beg, steal and borrow from the film department. Goldsmiths was a tricky time: you had to find your own way. It was only when I saw a contemporary show at the Whitney, during a visit to New York in 1993, that the wide variety of possibilities in art really blew me away, like an explosion with fragments flying off in different directions."

Already, McQueen was fascinated by the potential of film as an artist's medium. "I was a zombie for foreign films," he says, remembering in particular the impact of a John Cassavetes season in 1992. "I loved the intimacy of his films, their changing moods, and the feeling that you never knew what was coming next." This fluidity and unpredictable excitement characterised the two films he showed at the ICA's *Mirage: Enigma of Race, Difference and Desire* in 1995.



"Even though I'm a Catholic, and definitely an English guy, I'm open and changing, not stuck in a particular identity" — Steve McQueen reflects on his success at his ICA exhibition

Both were silent and black and white, like so many of the early movies he admires. They stood out with impressive conviction in this large international exhibition.

"I didn't want to do *Mirage* at first," he confesses. "It was an all-black show, but that's never been an issue for me and I said no. But I didn't have a dealer, and nobody else was interested in my work. So I had to go back to the ICA."

One of his films, *Bear*, was subsequently bought by the Tate Gallery. At the Tate Gallery, McQueen's film has a dramatic, improvised flow that still typifies some of McQueen's recent work. The principal film in his new show is just as enigmatic, even

though McQueen has now moved on to colour, a triple screen and — for the first time — sound. Called *Drumroll*, it records the giddy journey of an oil barrel pushed by a pink-coated McQueen through the streets of New York. Different viewpoints from the drum are projected alongside each other, with dizzying glimpses of pedestrians, traffic, skyscrapers and the artist himself. The soundtrack adds to the onslaught, with its cacophonous fragments of drum rattle, car din, startled comments from passers-by and McQueen's reiterated "Excuse me, please" as he hurtles along. "It's posh Manhattan," he says, "a very interesting piece of real estate, so damn expensive. But the film is more to do with economy of movement, the wheel, oil, and taking the city — anyone can do it."

McQueen first went to New York when he was six years old. "Most of my family live in the US, either in Brooklyn or Miami, and I've considered moving to New York myself. But I didn't think I'd survive there: for artists, it's like an elephants' graveyard." McQueen's other new film at the ICA, *Deadpan*, pays a highly dramatic homage to a celebrated slapstick moment from Buster Keaton's movie *Steamboat Bill Jr.* Commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where McQueen held a solo exhibition in 1997, it centres on the collapse of a newly built house. McQueen stands beside it, and looks as if he will be fatally injured. Instead, an open window in the façade descends directly on him, leaving the artist uncannily upright and untouched. We see the miraculous event several times over, from various vantages and at different speeds.

McQueen, the very image of the defiant survivor, remains extraordinarily still and impassive throughout, even though he must have dreaded filming such a potentially lethal sequence. "*Deadpan* is all about that," he says, "about passing through the body." He is framed by the window frame and by the institution where my work is shown.

A restless individual, McQueen likes to move on. Two years ago, he decamped with his Dutch partner to Amsterdam. Their child was born there recently, and he cannot imagine ever returning to London. "I don't like it here any more," he explains. "I was getting into a routine, and I love the idea that nobody knows me in Amsterdam. The living conditions are great, especially for kids."

Compared with London, doesn't he find Amsterdam quiet? "Don't forget that I grew up in Ealing," he says with a wry grin. "Anyway, it's not important to me to live in an artists' milieu. I've never liked groups — they remind me too much of joining the Boy Scouts. Even though I'm a Catholic, and definitely an English guy, I'm open and changing, not stuck in a particular identity."

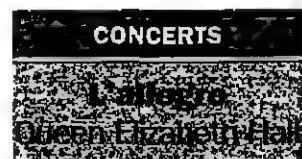
The key, for McQueen, lies in his art. "It enables you to work things out in public, creating your own world. Otherwise you're powerless: it would be terrible."

Steve McQueen at the ICA (0171 493 0493) until March 21

Handel without care

George Frideric Handel was lucky that he set in his adopted language, you can't go far wrong with the Authorised Version, Milton and Congreve. His settings of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are surely among the greatest music inspired by the English language. When the composer's genius matches Milton's you are somewhere close to heaven, or so it seemed in a packed, spellbound QEH at last Thursday's performance by the King's Consort.

There is a degree of puddingy proof. When, at Handel's suggestion, Charles Jennens supplied words for the short, synthesizing third part, *Il Moderato*, the level of poetic inspiration falls to earth with a thud and so, momentarily, does the music, suggesting that Moderation is indeed the English Vice rather than various other interesting candidates for that dubious honour. But then Handel hits you with the sublime final duet, *As steals the morn upon the night* (significantly, Jennens took the image from Shakespeare), and all is forgiven. Maybe the manuscript was on the desk



when Gluck paid his famous visit to Brook Street — Orpheus's *Che pura ciel* is the worst of homages.

Not that everything was perfect at last week's concert. Robert King could have done with an infusion of *moderato*: his tempos veered between the sort of glutinous adagios surely unknown in Handel's day and some allegros that, while blessedly lively, were a bit of a scramble. But the slow speeds led the singers into the sort of pious delivery redolent more of the cathedral than the concert hall — or, indeed, the theatre where, as Mark Morris's magnificent danced version so powerfully argued, *L'Allegro* belongs. Even more harmful was the standard of diction. From the very opening *Hence, loathed Melancholy*, of *Cerberus* and *blackest Midnight* born, Milton's syntax is gloriously pungent, but you would scarcely

have known it from the generally mealy-mouthed, polite delivery. And if the words go, so does the meaning.

What the operatic world needs is an equivalent of the National Theatre's legendary Patsy Rodenburg, someone to prod soloists into, first, asking themselves precisely why they are singing the words in their charge, then into whamming them out.

Admittedly, someone may have said something in the interval: in the second part Susan Gritton started to hit the consonants and found a verbal eloquence to match the succulent beauty of her musical phrasing, and it was here that Claron McKadden came into her own with sprightly coloratura and a beguiling trill.

Neal Davies (bass) was the most consistently communicative soloist: Lorna Anderson and Paul Agnew too seldom escaped the straitjacket of church-choir politesse. Excellent solos from Rachel Brown (flute) and Andrew Clark (horn); decent (no more) playing from the King's Consort. But a work of blazing genius.

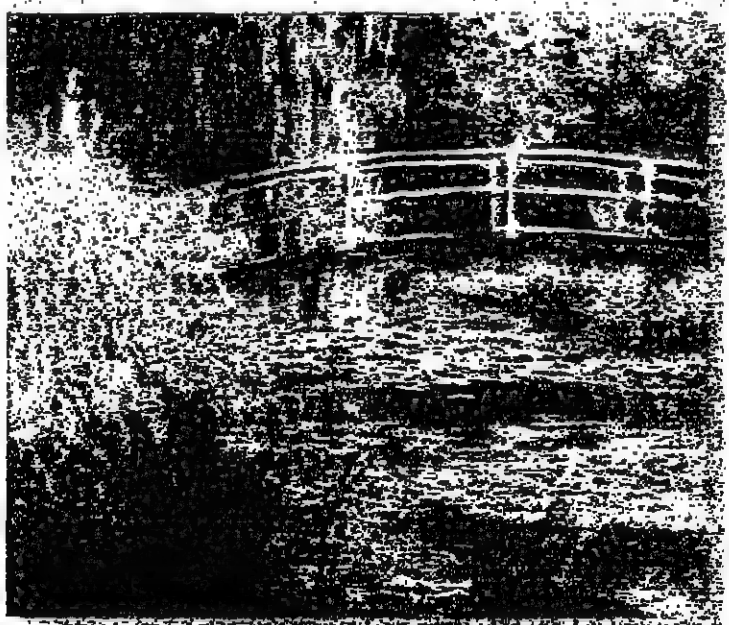
RODNEY MILNES

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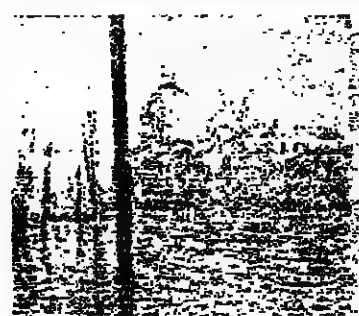
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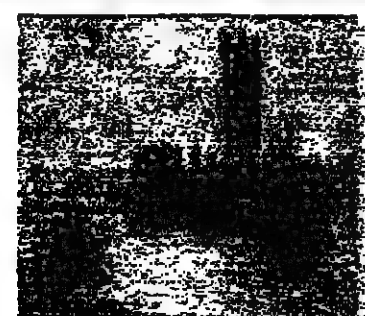
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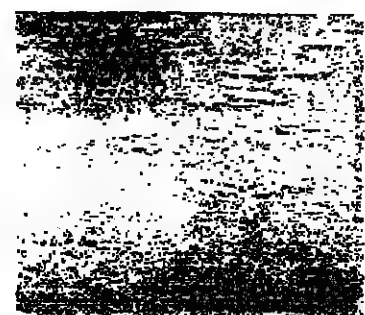
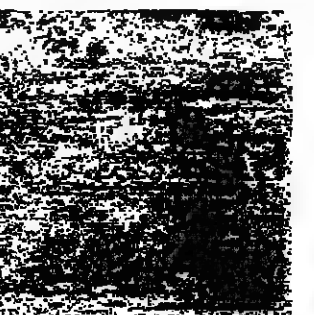
The Grand Canal, Venice, 1908



The Artist's Garden at Giverny, 1900



The Houses of Parliament, Sunset, 1904



Pond with Waterlilies, 1904

Waterlilies with Weeping Willow, 1903

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CHANGING TIMES

Thorns on the lark

There were songs about spacemen. There were songs about birds. And Raspun. And Prince Edward. And lost loves, rivers, and mobile phones. There was more and more, three hours of more: Sarah Walker singing directly on to the strings of the Steinway's innards: Melanie Marshall, the voice dark and smoky, dressed to kill in a Byzantine mosaic; plus cabaret fooling from Kit and the Widow. This was Songbook '98, an idiosyncratic sample of last year's crop of lyric English utterances, devised, presented and mostly accompanied by Richard Sisson, the widowed half of the comedy team.

Was it fun? Not really, although you can appreciate the thrill young composers must feel at hearing their works so forthrightly delivered. Walker took charge of the fledglings with Christopher Gould at the piano. She floated on air over the delicate fragments of Mika



la Leigh Bromley's *Eight Scenes from Moonlighting Wood*, eerily conjured Sophie Viney's *Music of the Spheres* from the piano strings and made the best of some ungrateful writing in Alastair Stout's *Behold! A New World* and Quentin Thomas's jocular *Three Interludes For Contemporary Spacemen*.

Among such company, Hugh Wood stood out as the one senior citizen. It was good to hear this most thoughtful of composers setting D. H. Lawrence in *River Roses*, tenderly flowing in Daniel Norman's light tenor. But the clash between serious art songs and Sisson's incessantly chirpy introductions grew steadily more irksome.

Following the interval, 30

members of the Berkshire Youth Choir, BBC Sainsbury's Choir of the Year 1996, filed on to the stage with their director Cillian Dibbon. Sisson's eight *Bird Songs*, madly eclectic, beguiled the ear rather more than the two Sisson compositions already heard. Then, after two melting songs by Clement Ishmael, it was showtime, whether you wanted it or not. Leigh McDonald popped in from *Killing Raspun* to sing and squawk through a sub-Sondheim ditty. The National Youth Music Theatre's show *The Kissing Dance* was also heard from. But the only theatre song with real strength was Richard Taylor's *What We Have*, from his musical version of *The Go-Between*.

Then the cabaret clowns took over: not perhaps the best way to end an evening already strong on self-indulgence and weak on memorable music.

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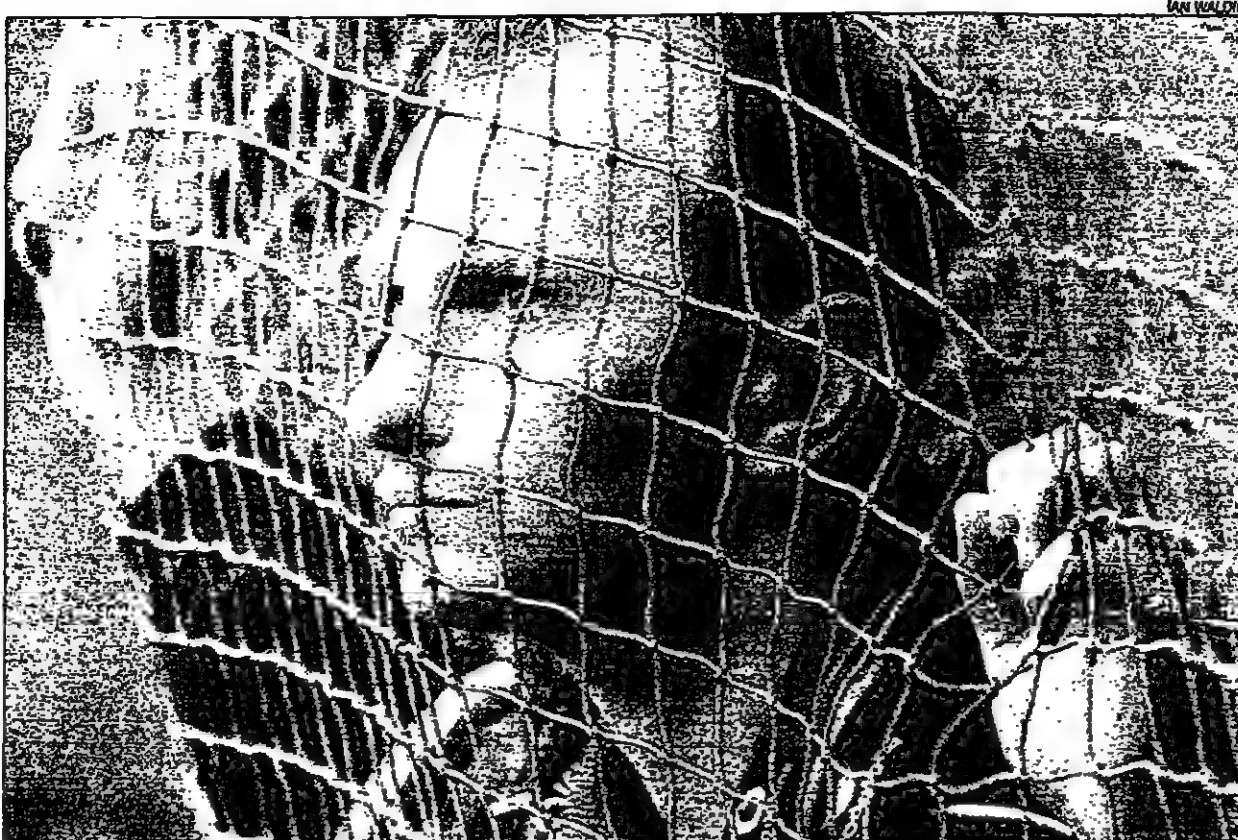
CRICKET: DIVERGENCE OF TWO FORMS OF GAME EMPHASISED BY LEFT-HANDER'S IMPORTANCE TO ENGLAND

Fairbrother makes the world of difference

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

THE Australia party to tour the West Indies, announced earlier this week, and England's team for the finals of the triangular tournament that will be resolved this week, highlight the growing independence of the one-day game. Of the 15 Australians picked for the Caribbean tour, seven are not involved in the present one-day thrash, eight if you include the injured Jason Gillespie. They include specialists like Michael Slater and Matthew Elliott, the opening batsmen, Ian Healy, the wicket-keeper, and Stuart MacGill, the wrist spinner. England have 15 players here now after Mark Alleyne's departure. Only five are first-choice Test players — Stewart Hussain, Gough, Mullally and Headley. Occasionally there is a convergence of the two. Adam Dale, the 30-year-old seam bowler who has played just a single Test, may have thought that his international career was restricted to the one-day games. Yet, as a result of his one-day form, he is on the plane later this month, to supply the steady seam bowling that men such as Paul Reiffel have done in the past.

On the whole, though, the two games are drifting further apart. A player such as Mark Ealham, Kent's bowling all-rounder, may play Tests at home in the future, but he is unlikely to be on another tour. Adam Hothby appears to be one degree under Test level, and Ashley Giles can expect greater opportunities as a one-day smotherer than a five-day spinner. Among the batsmen, Nick Knight may not come again at Test level, which is a shame, although he has an important part to play during the World Cup, as opener and superb all-round fielder. The most interesting players in both teams are the left-handers, Neil Fairbrother and Michael Bevan. Both played Test cricket as young men, and neither really conquered it, although there was a time, two years ago, when the latter's unorthodox left-arm spin was buying a few wickets, that Bevan was on the cusp of a regular run in the Australia team. Both men are excellent fielders, although one must enter a caveat against Fairbrother: when his handstrings are not playing up, he remains doubtful for the first of the finals, at the Sydney Cricket Ground



Fairbrother stares through the netting at England's practice session in Sydney yesterday, forced inside because of rain

today (where heavy rain yesterday has put the match in some doubt), after missing the last two preliminary games with a recurrence of this old problem. There must be a real doubt that he can stand up to the strain of the World Cup. Fairbrother was one of the "ones that got away". Picked as a 23-year-old by England in 1987, he got off to a bad start in his first Test and never found the composure to turn his bristling talent into something substantial.

LINKS

TELEVISION: Sky Sports 2, 7.30am (live), 8am (replay). The Times one-day series, hotline — 0801 881 461. Reports, updates and commentary. Calls cost 50p per minute.

Bevan is a more complicated man. In Yorkshire, and in Sussex, where he has played his county cricket, Bevan has shown himself to be a brilliant player and, in holding the innings together in one-day cricket, he has few peers. Australia bat him at No 6, with the task of finding the necessary runs in the final stages, and he has rewarded them with a sequence of important performances. He has also, from time to time, taken them close and not delivered victory. Fairbrother, a mainstay of the Lancashire team through two decades of high achievement in the shorter game, has played in ten Lord's finals, and been a winner seven times. He played superbly for England in the 1992 World

Cup, when they reached the final, but his half-century that night in Melbourne could not deny Pakistan. Now, to his own astonishment, he is again a member of a World Cup party, restored to the side by Graham Thorpe's back injury and his own good form. His Test days were over long ago, and for a time it seemed his county career was far from secure, but he has returned with renewed purpose. In the longer game, bowlers have exposed the shortcomings of both batsmen. Fast bowlers literally bounced Bevan into submission, while Fairbrother's technical weakness was outside off stump, where he would open the face of the bat — and still does — to run the ball down to third man.

In one-day cricket, where the short ball is penalised and there are fewer close fielders, they can manoeuvre the ball around the field with less risk. Both Bevan and Fairbrother are expert at pushing those tight singles and twos. Fairbrother's importance to the England side has been seen all too clearly in this competition. Together with Hick, he forms the backbone of the middle order. Hussain has had his moments, but still looks stiff, and Crawley has missed the boat. Bevan and Fairbrother, wise guys in the ways of the one-day world, should Australia or England prosper this summer, and Australia almost certainly will, they will have done much to bring it about.

Wasim critical of umpire and slow pitch

FROM RICHARD HOBSON IN DELHI

THE harmony that has been so conspicuous through Pakistan's first significant tour of India for 12 years was threatened last night after Wasim Akram criticised the umpiring and the pitch in the second Test match in Delhi. As the touring team left for a three-day game in Kochi, which begins tomorrow, Cammie Smith, the match referee, confirmed that he was investigating comments made by the Pakistan captain in *The Pioneer*, an Indian newspaper.

Even if Smith decides that Wasim has not contravened the International Cricket Council (ICC) code of conduct by saying that Pakistan "got a couple of debatable decisions" during the defeat by 212 runs, then the player can be judged to have raised the matter ahead of the first game in the inaugural Asian Test Championship (ATC) next Tuesday.

There will be a measure of support in the international game for Wasim's suggestion that Tests should be officiated by two umpires from neutral countries instead of the present arrangement where a neutral operates alongside an umpire from the home nation. But because this is among the innovations agreed for the ATC — sanctioned by the sport's governing body — Wasim might have been better holding his tongue until after the match in Calcutta.

From the moment of arrival in India three weeks ago, the tour has been a diplomatic and public relations triumph. However, the frequency and volume of Pakistan's appealing during the two Tests has criticised in the Indian press. Most newspapers also felt that the touring team enjoyed the better of the decisions in the first game in Madras.

A.V. Jayaprakash, from India, stood at the end from which Anil Kumble took ten wickets in the second innings on Sunday. He gave five batsmen out to catches close to the wicket and three leg-before. Replays did not prove error in any case.

Wasim, while acknowledging that the better side won in Delhi, said: "We need neutral umpires in all cricket and especially in an India-Paki-

stan series. That will prevent all controversy. If a neutral umpire makes the wrong decision, then both teams will accept it. I knew it was only a matter of time before the wicket played up and, to make matters worse, we also got a couple of debatable decisions."

Wasim felt that the pitch, a slow turner, placed too great an advantage on the side winning the toss. "How can it be fair when you lose the toss and your chances of winning the match are immediately reduced by half?" Wasim said. "I thought it might turn from the third day but Saqlain [Mustafiz] got it to turn viciously in the second session."

An unchanged India squad will reconvene at the weekend for the start of the ATC, a triangular tournament also involving Sri Lanka. The media here tends to be a little one-



Wasim: controversy

Loye supplies ideal platform

BULAWAYO (first day of five: England A won toss; England A have scored 256 for four wickets against Zimbabwe A

EIGHT years have passed since Mal Loye made his first appearance for Northamptonshire. Before the start of the last domestic season only seven first-class hundreds had followed. That figure now stands at 12, the latest of which he reached yesterday for England A in making an

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS IN BULAWAYO

unbeaten 122 on the first day of the second "Test" in Bulawayo. Loye's was the highlight of a professional, if occasionally muted, performance that has supplied a platform from which a sizeable first-innings total should follow.

Michael Vaughan won his sixth successive toss on tour but was infuriated with

himself when, after eight scoreless overs, he steered Bryan Strang straight to gully. Loye and Darren Maddy, the Leicestershire batsman, consolidated with an attractive partnership of 122 in 39 overs. Maddy contributing a solid 64 before turning Andy Whittall to short mid-on. Two more wickets fell before Loye, who moved to a century with his fourteenth boundary, and Vikram Solanki added 67 to take England to the close.

Gough plays leading role

WELLINGTON (second day of four: New Zealand Under-19, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 60 runs behind England Under-19

ENGLAND Under-19 had the opportunity to bat New Zealand out of the series here yesterday. However, after lunch the second new ball halted their progress. They scored only 24 runs in 24 overs and lost their last four wickets for only two runs. England

FROM JOHN STERN IN WELLINGTON

then failed to take a wicket in the final session. Michael Gough, the England captain, batted for more than 6½ hours for 116, one run more than the lead his side achieved when they were bowled out for 225. He has worked hard on his off-side strokes and his driving looked in reasonable order. The century came up with his twelfth

boundary, an on-driven four off Martin, the left-arm spinner. But, batting with the tail, Gough was caught behind as he drove with uncharacteristic abandon at James Franklin. Gough's partnership of 142 with Richard Dawson, who batted with admirable application, was the only one of substance in the England innings. Shaw took five wickets, as he did in New Plymouth.

Scoreboards, page 37

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This is a hand reported to me by Brian Jackson, one of the best players in the TGR £10 game. The play of the hearts depends on assumptions about the layout of the other suits.

Dealer South	Love all	Rubber bridge
♠ Q87 ♥ J876 ♦ 1064 ♣ 1082	♠ A J 9 2 ♥ A K 4 3 ♦ A 5 ♣ Q 7 6	♠ 10 6 4 3 ♥ 5 ♦ K J 9 8 2 ♣ 9 5 3

Contract: Seven No-Trumps by South. Lead: six of diamonds.

South opened One No-Trump (15-17) and North, into his fifth glass of TGR's Red Infernator, ambitiously raised to Seven No-Trumps. West, a good player, led the six of diamonds. There was no chance of that being away from the king in a grand slam, but nevertheless declarer played low from dummy and the hand was over at trick one.

What declarer should do is take the ace of diamonds. He now has eleven tricks if he guesses the hearts: two in spades, four in hearts, one in diamonds and four in clubs. His best chance of two more is to find West with the queen of spades, and East with four spades and the king of diamonds. If that is the distribution, East will be squeezed in the end-game.

After winning the ace of diamonds declarer should take his club winners. Here all follow to three rounds, and each of West, North, and East discards a diamond on the fourth round. Now,

how should declarer set about the hearts?

East has shown up with three clubs and two small diamonds. Along with the hypothesised king of diamonds, and four spades, that means East does not have room to hold four hearts (an exercise in counting up to thirteen, which I hope anyone who doesn't see the point immediately will now do).

So declarer should play a heart to the ace and a heart back to the queen. East's singleton is revealed, and declarer continues by finessing against West's jack and cashing the last heart. That reduces everyone to four cards: East cannot keep 10-6-4-3 of spades and the king of diamonds, and if he discards a spade all dummy's spades are good after declarer plays the king of spades and finesses the jack.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

OCOTILLO	RAZET
a. A dance	a. A breed of dog
b. A sherry	b. A ballet step
c. A cactus	c. Bloodless bullfighting
SABIR	RIRORIRO
a. A teacher	a. A washerman
b. A pidgin	b. A warbler
c. A corkscrew dagger	c. Sheep's eye as delicacy

Answers on page 38

KEENE on CHESS

By RICHARD KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Drawn outcome

Today I conclude my coverage of the important ten-game match between Michael Adams, England's top-ranked grandmaster, and Yasser Seirawan, the prominent US grandmaster. The final score of two wins each with six draws led to a tied outcome. I wrap up with the final decisive game and an exciting draw.

White: Yasser Seirawan
Black: Michael Adams
Mermaid Beach Club
Bermuda 1999

Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4	e5
2 d4	d5
3 Nf3	exd4
4 Nxd4	Nf6
5 Bc4	Ng6
6 Ng5	e6
7 Qc2	Nd6
8 Qc3	h6
9 Nf3	g5
10 Nf3	g4
11 Qc3	g3
12 Qc3	g2
13 Ng3	Nd7
14 O-O	Nee5
15 Nee5	b6
16 Q3	Q7
17 Ng3	Ng4
18 Qg4	h5
19 Q3	h6
20 Qe8	h7
21 Qe8	h8
22 Qe8+	h8
23 c4	Qe5
24 Bc5	Bd5
25 Qd5	f4
26 Bc2	f3
27 Rf1	Qd4
28 g3	Qd2
29 Rad1	Qd4
30 e3	Qd4
31 Kf2	Qd4
32 Rg3	Qd4
33 B4	Qd4
34 Rf4	Qd2
35 Rg4+	h7
36 Qd4	Qd4
37 R5	Qd4
38 R7	Qd4
39 R6	Qd4
40 R6	Qd4
41 R4	Qd4
42 R6	Qd4

White resigns

Diagram of final position

1	g5	1	g5
2	g4	2	g4
3	g3	3	g3
4	g2	4	g2
5	g1	5	g1
6	h6	6	h6
7	h5	7	h5
8	h4	8	h4
9	h3	9	h3
10	h2	10	h2
11	h1	11	h1
12	g6	12	g6
13	g7	13	g7
14	g8	14	g8
15	g9	15	g9
16	g10	16	g10
17	g11	17	g11
18	g12	18	g12
19	g13	19	g13
20	g14	20	g14
21	g15	21	g15
22	g16	22	g16
23	g17	23	g17
24	g18	24	g18
25	g19	25	g19
26	g20	26	g20
27	g21	27	g21
28	g22	28	g22
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31	g25	31	g25
32	g26	32	g26
33	g27	33	g27
34	g28	34	g28
35	g29	35	g29
36	g30	36	g30
37	g31	37	g31
38	g32	38	g32
39	g33	39	g33
40	g34	40	g34
41	g35	41	g35
42	g36	42	g36

Draw agreed

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Keene — Krumpalnik, Slovenia, 1991. Black is two pawns ahead but, surprisingly, has some difficulties as his knight is threatened and the white queen and rook are a powerful force. Black's next move cleverly sets up a winning tactic for him. What did he play?

Solution on page 38

Pitman advocates value of feminine touch

Earth Summit leads home Suny Bay in last year's National

History lessons worth heeding

Martin Pipe has made his usual block entry but the runner who will be difficult to keep out of the frame is Eudipe, a recent Sandown winner, who boasts an impressive catalogue of big-race form and is worth a small each-way investment at 20-1.

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2	round. 5.00 third.	
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5-2 James Dec. 3-1 Complimentary, 7-1 When U These 3-1 Producers, James - Pop
State Wides. 12-1 Sharp Rhythms, 14-1 others.

One new coach experiments with winning line-up while the other sticks to familiar formation

France draw confidence from status as world champions

By Matt Dickinson

THE SMELL of success lingers around the France camp as closely as autograph hunters surround Zinedine Zidane. It follows the players from their hotel to the training ground, and it will waft with them this evening as they journey past Wembley Way. It is an air of utter assuredness that comes from being champions of the world, and it has transformed good players into great ones.

With men like Desailly, Petit and Zidane advancing to their peak, it is not just the cockerels on their shirts that can afford to strut and crow. The supreme self-confidence of the French has been interpreted by some as arrogance. They flew into London only 48 hours before tonight's game, and the casualness of their manner can occasionally smack of conceit.

Do not be fooled. It is simply that the machine is ticking over so smoothly now that it needs only the slightest greasing. Asked what the coach told the team before games, one player replied: "He tells us we are world champions so enjoy it."

And it really does appear that simple. The task of picking the side has now fallen to Roger Lemerre, who took over after the World Cup triumph last summer. It might have seemed a genuine example of the "impossible job", given that his country had just scaled the Everest of international football, but Lemerre shows no signs of leading them down.

A canny, as well as a charming, operator, he remains unbeaten as an international manager. His background — something which the Football Association may care to note as it searches for a replacement for Glenn Hoddle — is far from prestigious and he was very much the safe option, just as Howard Wilkinson appears with England.

An international defender who won six caps, he was coach of the French military team until he was invited to join Aimé Jacquet's back-up staff last year, and he has no great stature in the world game. Nor is he a tactical genius, but he does not need to be as he builds on the strengths of an impenetrable defence and redoubtable midfield that made France so formidable in the World Cup.

A more adventurous soul by nature than Jacquet — and a more

personable man as well — he is now tinkering with an attack which, if successful, could make France a side of terrifying potential. Leboeuf and Vieira, idols in the English game, are not even likely to start. Nicolas Anelka, the Arsenal forward, is Lemerre's great hope for the future, but he remains as hard to predict as his moods. "He might have been picked for the World Cup, but it was a little too early for him," Lemerre said. "If he keeps up the good work, he will be a great player."

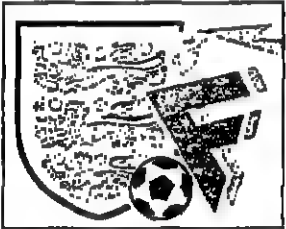
Arsenal supporters who remain unconvinced by that argument should have the chance to judge further tonight. The 19-year-old is likely to start, and Lemerre may experiment by using his pace in isolation up front. "Keown and Adams are good at man-to-man marking, but not so happy when there is a lot of running around them," Lemerre said, and he may try to confuse England's centre backs by giving them only their Arsenal clubmate to mark.

Such tactics would see Zidane and Djorkaeff, the Internazionale forward who will play against Manchester United in the European Cup quarter-final next month — in tandem just behind the striker. Deschamps, the captain, and Petit will bolster the midfield while Vieira must compete with Boghossian for one place.

The defence, with Blanc likely to be selected ahead of Leboeuf, is the one that played for most of the World Cup. Such a team would be one lacking in width, but it appears that the France coach has no intention of recalling David Ginola, the Tottenham Hotspur winger, who has been exiled from his national team since 1993.

"We all love David, but I am not obliged to pick him," Lemerre said. "He does not integrate into the team. David is 32 now, and we have many good young players. Look at Anelka. He is only 19, but he has won the league and cup with Arsenal and played in the Champions' League."

"David's talent is not in dispute. I used to watch Paris Saint-Germain just to see him. His ability is exceptional, but I also have to think about the team." And what a team when Vieira cannot even be guaranteed a place.



Zidane, the France midfield player, may be asked by Lemerre to play an attacking role behind Anelka

Wilkinson opts for proven defensive unit

By Rob Hughes

FOR the first time in five years, debate of the England team on the morning of a Wembley match can be done knowing more or less the starting XI. Howard Wilkinson, the caretaker coach, takes on France with a basic, very British 4-4-2 formation. His defence is from Arsenal, the best defensive unit in the FA Carling Premiership. And, more important than the fact that we know the plan, the players know it.

It was Terry Venables who began the poker game of concealing the England line-up to the opposition. But it was Glenn Hoddle who took secrecy to perverse extremes, not even taking the players into his confidence. How on earth they could rehearse, only the trainer knew.

Wilkinson has stripped team selection of its mythology. Logic dictated that with three days to prepare a side against the world champions, he should build on the rock of the Arsenal defence that, for a decade, has been the most secure in the Premiership.

Seaman, Dixon, Adams and Keown are getting older, but they know one another, they are pragmatic and they have no fear of the big occasion. The argument that a foreigner should be hired to help England is thus, at a stroke, absorbed: the Arsenal rearguard was forged by George Graham, a Scot, and retained by Arsène Wenger, a Frenchman.

What Wilkinson cannot do is deploy the guards, the two midfield players who work like dervishes to keep to a minimum the exposure of that ageing Arsenal defence to the pace and running power of young attackers. That duo, Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira, are French, and thus available to the opposition tonight.

"We know France are world champions," Tony Adams said. "I work with about 12 of them ... and I'm not going back on Thursday defeated!" Adams is one of the senior England players with whom Wilkinson, wisely, seeks co-operation. When a player who has represented his country 56 times holds the opinion that Englishmen are more comfortable in a back line of four, it is fanciful to impose the German preference of 3-5-2.

Hoddle insisted upon it, but also kept Adams. Wilkinson starts with the players on side. However, one hopes that the Football Association go no further with the suggestion that players should be consulted on the appointment of a permanent coach — for that would be akin to asking pupils to nominate their own master.

Adams, once more, has sensible words on the subject. "The players have got to play," he said, "and the managers have got to manage. I've had 16 years as a pro, so if I think I've got things to say on the playing side, I'll offer it to the manager, whoever he is. But I'm not into the politics of it."

The responsibility for selecting the coach is for the FA, not the players. Their job is to win tonight, and they can because, as worthy as France proved

last summer, the World Cup was on their ground, under their organisation. The France defence is mighty, possibly even better than that of Arsenal. Their midfield, organised by Deschamps, will be met by the Liverpool combination of Ince, fighting Petit's fire, and Redknapp, hoping to supply the flanks of Beckham and Anderson and the forward power of Shearer and, presumably, Owen.

Wilkinson wants to take his third day on the training ground to convince himself that the Shearer-Owen tandem knits together better than Fowler or Cole. That is not a coach holding back but a man using what little time he has to see who is sharpest on the day and to pick, if possible, a winning XI.

England need victory more than France; they need something to boost their confidence before the crucial European championship qualifying contest with Poland next month. And Wilkinson, unless he has been told something that we do not yet know, needs a win to ensure that this is not, for him, a one-night stand. Starting afresh in March would be a reckless gamble, so while there is little for the future in Wilkinson's selection, he clearly deems it more important to get the present right.

Until tomorrow, the best that he can deliver is a record that reads: Played one, won one, defeated the champions of the world.

'He has stripped team selection of its mythology'

History points to England facing stiff task

By Mel Webb

AS THOUGH they do not have enough on their hands, a legacy left to the present England team by their predecessors will be abroad at Wembley tonight. If they manage to defeat France, they will be bucking a powerful trend — only once in the past 23 years have England contrived a victory over the world champions at the time in a full international.

The last time they did so was also at Wembley, but it is necessary to go back to May, 1980 to find it. England beat Argentina 3-1, but the spirit of triumphalism that was thick in the air that night was as nothing compared with the national side's previous victory over the World Cup holders of the day.

It was March 12, 1975. England v West Germany before a crowd of 100,000 at Wembley, and against all the odds England won 2-0 to claim their first success over their old rivals since beating them 4-2 in the World Cup final of 1966.

The team, managed by Don Revie, were without Paul Madeley, Allan Clarke, Kevin Beattie and David Johnson, all of whom had played in an FA Cup replay between Leeds United and Ipswich Town the night before, but a virtuoso performance by one of English football's wayward geniuses more than compensated for their absence. Alan Hudson was a talent that went largely unfulfilled, both for club and country. This, however, was his

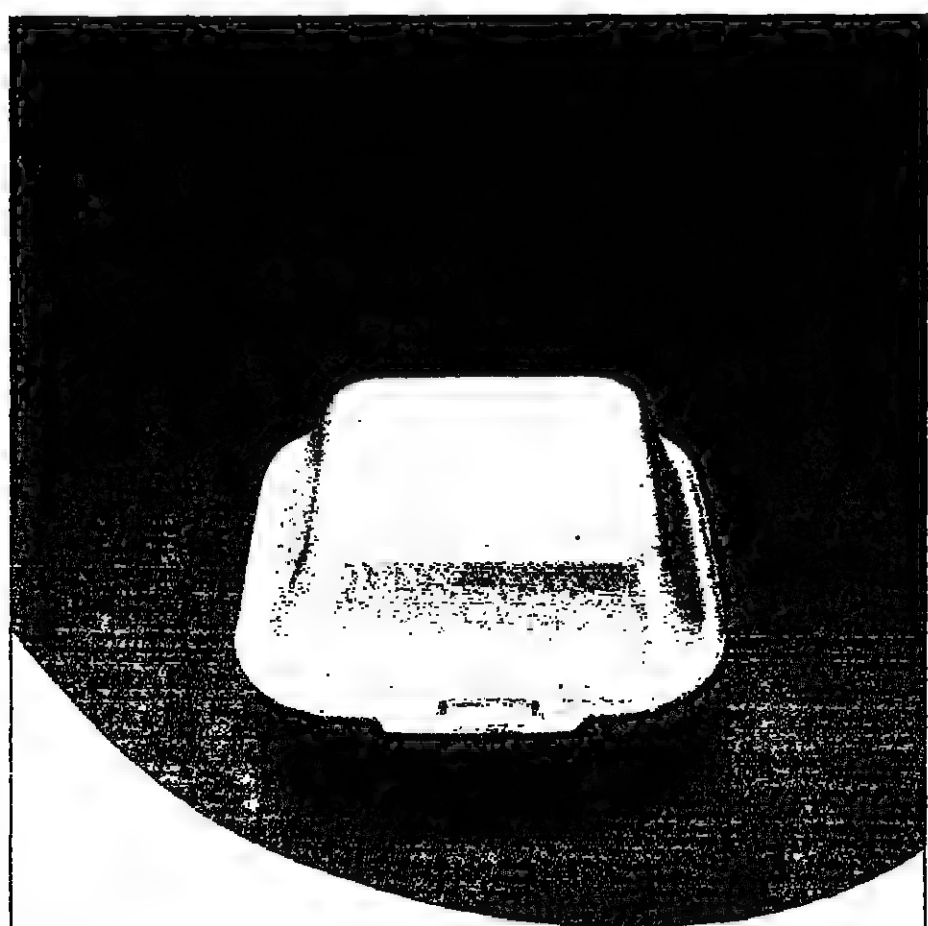
night of nights, a match in which he was the spark behind the flames as Bell and McDonald scored the all-important goals. Hudson had never produced such a performance for England before — and was destined never to again.

It was the first time England had beaten the world champions for 19 years — in May, 1956 they enjoyed a 3-1 victory over, again, West Germany.

DETAILS

1956: England 3 Italy 2
1959: Italy 2 England 2
1960: Italy 0 England 4
1964: England 2 Italy 0
1966: Uruguay 2 England 1
1968: England 2 Uruguay 4
1970: England 3 West Germany 1
1974: West Germany 1 England 3
1978: Brazil 2 England 0
1982: England 1 Brazil 3
1986: England 1 Brazil 1
1990: Brazil 5 England 1
1994: England 2 West Germany 0
1998: West Germany 2 England 1
1998: England 1 Italy 2
1998: England 1 Brazil 3
1998: England 0 Brazil 1

In between had come a sequence of four encounters against Brazil, in which their best result was a 1-1 draw at Wembley in 1963 and the worst a 5-1 hammering at the Maracana in Rio in May, 1964. England had Charlton, Greaves and Moore, but Brazil had Pelé and the maestro destroyed England with a performance to savour. England held their own for an hour but were a routed rabble by the end. Two years later they were on the brink of becoming world champions themselves.



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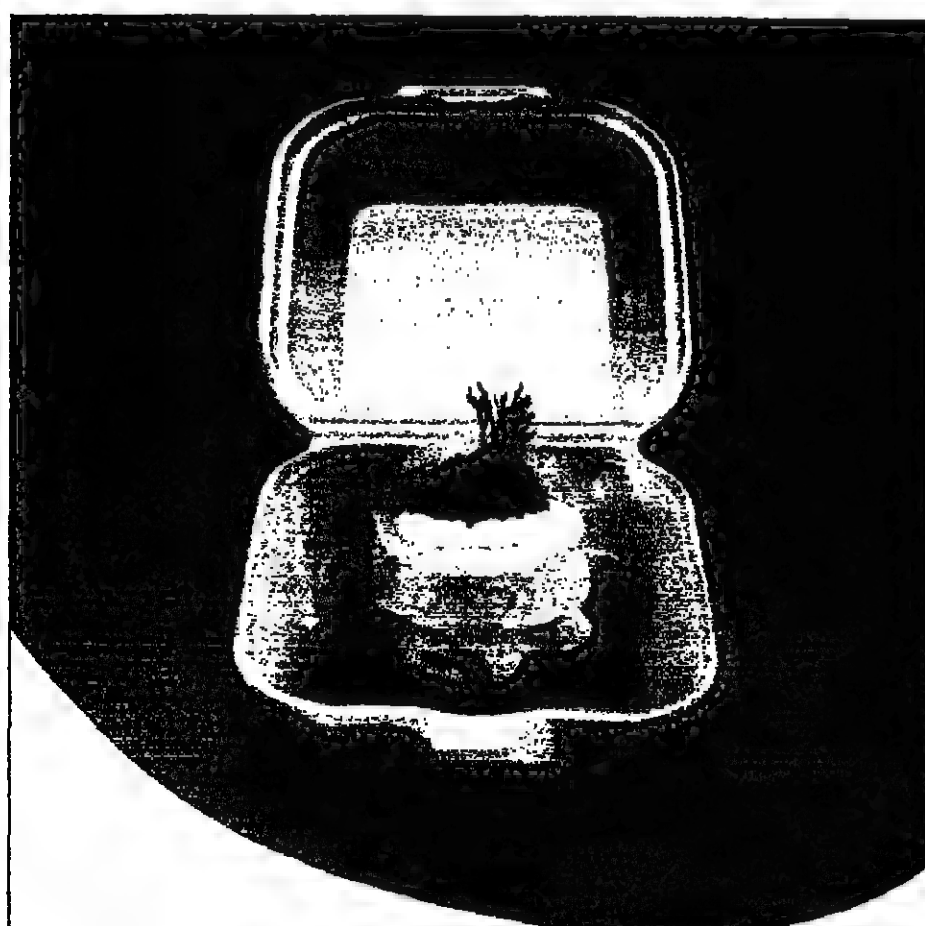
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Mind games take their toll

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

There are plenty of stories about the wicked witch that turns her victims into stone. It seemed that Stephen Hendry had been turned into wood. To be fair — perhaps the word I am looking for is unfair — he starts closer than most of us.

But by the time he had been beaten by Tony Drago, he looked even more like a Stan Laurel puppet than ever before, and that takes a bit of doing. Mournful-looking even in moments of effortless triumph, in defeat he was a neatly-chiselled version of the tragic muse.

If you looked a trifle deeper into the business at the Benson and Hedges Masters championship at Wembley, you found a fellow called Steve Davis being beaten by Ken Doherty. Weird. With snooker, and with results like these, we have had to rethink all we thought we knew about sport.

Perhaps that has been the most instructive facet about the snooker boom of the Eighties, and its continued popularity at sub-teen level: snooker has given us a new set of rules about sport. For how could Hendry possibly lose? He beat Drago 12 times on the dot; he has won the present competition six times; he once put together 23 successive victories at the Masters.

So perhaps the great champion had an off day. He has achieved so much, he can be excused an aberration. But no, Drago has beaten him in their past three meetings. So perhaps Drago has improved. But the fact of the matter is that Hendry — unbeatable Hendry — has not won a title



Fading star: The golden years are over for Hendry as he contemplates another defeat

on British soil since 1997. And as for Davis, his own unbeatable days are distant history. When a great footballer begins to fail, we nod wisely and say: poor fellow, his legs have gone. But there is nothing on earth the matter with the legs of Steve and Stephen. These four terms are eminent-

ly capable of supporting their two players for a stroll around the baize. They can even take their masters through the tricky shots when they are standing on only one.

No, poor fellows, it is their brains that have gone. That is the heart of the matter. When a tennis champion reaches the

end, we tend to say that the spirit and the appetite is still there, but his legs have gone and his hand-eye co-ordination has let him down. We say much the same thing for all the once-greats in all the running-about sports. But snooker seems to be telling us that we are wrong in doing so. In

'Why don't snooker players retire with grace and take their cues back home?'

theory, a standing-still sport should allow a player to go on and on for ever and ever. Champion golfers and snooker players should be able to carry on into dotage; and so they do. They just stop winning.

It is as if the muscles of greatness have atrophied. The hamstring of confidence is torn. The cruciate ligament of self-certainty has been irreparably damaged. And no amount of keyhole surgery can fix it. They will play again, sure, but that extra half-yard of belief has gone. Gone for good.

In *The Times* yesterday, Phil Yates wrote of Hendry: "The problem is simple enough to diagnose: a chronic shortage of confidence." The same thing is true of Davis. But how much confidence does a chap need? Each has won the world championship six times. Davis managed it three times in a row. Hendry an extraordinary five times in row.

Of course, Fred Davis did manage a long-term hegemony over the world championship, winning it every time it was held between 1927 and 1946: but that was another era. It is a fact of life that modern champions cannot sustain their period of dominance for more than a few years.

Which leaves us looking at another unexpected face of the champion. If their brains have gone, what are they still doing there? Why don't they retire with grace and take their cues back home? The answer, certainly in Steve Davis's case, is that they are in thrall to the game. Davis is one of sport's slaves of the lamp. The play of the balls has him forever in its sway, the striving and the beauty of it all keep him a prisoner of sport.

It was total annihilation. Davis said after a defeat last year, "But it was wonderful to watch." And Davis won the Masters last year, briefly tasting his former glories, before falling back into his now accustomed role of one of the attendant lords of snooker.

Myth one: sporting greatness is largely a matter of physical fitness. Myth two: modern sporting people are only in it for the money.

Truth: with a champion, it is not the legs that go, but the brain. And what they have left is love. Love of the game, love of the struggle. Like the hapless victims turned into stone or wood, they are bewitched.

Higgins left well out of pocket

By PHIL YATES

JOHN HIGGINS, who has yet to experience the exhilaration of compiling a maximum break in competition, almost recorded his first during a 6-1 victory over Alain Robidoux in the Benson & Hedges Masters at Wembley Conference Centre yesterday.

The world champion and world No 1 was not extended on route to his fifth win over the wholly-ineffective Robidoux in six meetings. It was a one-sided affair, redeemed only by the excitement

generated when Higgins put together a run of 112 in the fourth frame.

Higgins, attempting to join Steve Davis and Stephen Hendry as the only player to simultaneously hold the world, United Kingdom and Masters titles, potted 14 reds with blacks to move within striking distance of a lucrative 147.

Unfortunately, Higgins did not achieve the desired angle for position on

the final red which lay awkwardly between the yellow spot and a middle pocket. As a result he was forced to take it on from distance and the red caught the jaws of a balk pocket.

With the colours ideally situated, Higgins would surely have claimed the highest-break award of £18,000 in addition to the keys to a Honda car valued at £30,000. Kirk Stevens thus remains the only competitor to compile a maximum in the 25-year history of the event.

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Austrians sustain dominance

FROM GRAHAM DUFFILL IN VAIL, COLORADO

WHEN Pete Seibert founded Vail in 1961, he modelled the town on an Austrian village and invited Austrians to come and teach the skiing. Nearly 30 years later, Austria is still dominating Vail, taking ten of the 15 medals awarded in the first week of the world championships.

The Austria team here is a small army. A million-pound budget, encompassing 50 skiers and 54 coaches, means that they can train wherever and whenever they wish. This summer they bought the exclusive rights to the Zermatt glacier in Switzerland for six weeks for £20,000, sub-letting training rights to their Swiss rivals between 5.30am and 8am.

The Austria team know that they are simply enjoying a streak of good form while their rivals have hit a rough, and, as one of their trainers said, "It's getting embarrassing already." The balance should change a little this week as the championships move away from the speed events into the technical races.

The women's giant slalom tomorrow, in particular, may increase Austria's embarrassment, since their leading woman, Alexandra Meissnitzer and Annika Wachter, have been dominant this season, winning every race before the world championships. But Deborah Compagnoni, the Olympic gold medal-winner from Italy, has been training hard in nearby Aspen and will be competitive after innumerable second places this year.

SNOW REPORTS									
Country	Depth (cm)	U	Conditions	Runs to Resort	Off/p	Weather (Spn)	C	Last snow	
Austria									
Alpe d'Huez	90-175	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	9/2		
Corvatsch	20-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-11	9/2		
Ellmauer	110-150	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
St. Anton	150-450	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	9/2		
Canada									
Whistler	135-180	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-4	9/2		
France									
Alpe d'Huez	150-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Corvatsch	205-220	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Ellmauer	150-170	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	9/2		
St. Anton	150-300	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
La Plagne	200-320	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Les Arcs	170-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	9/2		
Le Grand Massif	200-300	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Megeve	160-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-1	9/2		
Tignes	150-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Val d'Isere	180-300	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	9/2		
Val Thorens	150-320	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Italy									
Alpe di Cembra	80-185	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	9/2		
Corvatsch	110-150	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
St. Anton	80-170	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-9	9/2		
Val Thorens	60-120	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Switzerland									
Saas-Fee	150-280	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	9/2		
Grindelwald	90-247	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	9/2		
Verbena	140-225	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-21	9/2		
Wengen	150-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	9/2		
Saas-Fee	90-250	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	9/2		
St. Anton	150-300	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	9/2		
Val Thorens	100-155	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	9/2		
Val d'Isere	110-240	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
Val Thorens	80-220	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	9/2		
United States									
Aspen	105-130	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	4	6/2		
Steamboat	200-207	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	2	8/2		

Answers from page 34

OCOTILLO
A spiny shrub. *Fouquieria splendens*, of the family *Fouquieriaceae*, native to the south-western United States and Mexico, and bearing narrow, inconspicuous leaves and panicles of red flowers. The Spanish diminutive of the Nahuatl word *ocotl* a torch.

SABIR
(a) A French-based pidgin language used in parts of North Africa. From *sabir* "to know" in the language invented by Moliere for a song in *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670), probably an adaptation of the Spanish *saber* to know.

RAZET
(a) Bloodless bullfighting. In southern France, a contest in which teams of combatants compete to snatch a rosette from between the bull's horns. The Provencal word is *razet*.

RIRORIRO
(b) The New Zealand grey warbler. *Gerygone igata*, a small wren-like bird.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1. R8c: 2 a3b6 Qx2+ 3. R2d2 Rb1+ 4. Rf1 Rf1 checkmate.

A detective in the dock

Mersey Blues: A Fair Cop? BBC2, 9.00pm

This final chapter is devoted entirely to the arrest and conviction of Detective Chief Inspector Elmont "Ellie" Davies, a round thief-taker and unapologetic consumer of junk food ("If you're going to go off the rails you might as well do it properly") whose presence has dominated the five-part series. Have regular viewers spotted any flickers of self-doubt in the man? Any body language which might suggest he is not at peace with himself, let alone the corporate policies of new-style policing which he appears to loathe? Davies has taken a £10,000 bribe to undermine the prosecution of a man accused of attempted murder.

Blood on the Carpet: Guns 'n' Posies BBC2, 9.50pm

Who would have thought that Bev Wood, a modest, middle-aged lady running a traditional flower shop in Yorkshire, could have scythed down the entire board of Interflora? With a little help from another florist, Londoner Rose-Marie Watkins, and a lot of back-up from the family — some 2,600 members of the old Interflora, apparently a traditional, paternalistic firm — they came together at an extraordinary general meeting to voice their criticisms of the new chief executive, Doug McGrath, and his 13-strong management team. McGrath had been brought in "to be a bastard" and streamline Interflora in the face of growing competition from supermarkets. It was quite a meeting — and the ladies, with their specially hired lawyer and a powerful (male) backer from Bristol (and thereby hangs a twist in the tale) challenged the board and won, reducing all 13 of them to compost. Flower power or what?

Inside Story: Heartbreak BBC1, 10.15pm

This catalogue of personal tragedies has been assembled ostensibly for Valentine's Day but its whingers and weepers is the very reverse of hearts and flowers romances. The trouble is, they all seem to have started out romantically enough — but didn't look much beyond the Valentine hype. Thus, when love turned sour, John walked out on Val to follow up his dream girl on the Internet —



Kevin (left) and Rob flank Geoff Small, the producer, in *Black and White* (BBC1)

and married her in Boston, Massachusetts. Neil, a traveller, "took away the best ten years" of Dawn's life and left her and their three children for his gay lover, Paul. Karen seduced her sister's husband and so it rages on, with much shouting and spilling of tears along the way. A radio phone-in with Anna Raeburn helps to lighten this strange of woes, and surprisingly cheerful end captions bring the stories of the heartbreakers up to date.

Black & White BBC1, 10.15pm

Cast your mind back ten years to an experiment in Bristol where two reporters — one black, one white — took hidden cameras through the rounds of hotels to see if they met any racial discrimination. They did — plenty. But isn't there reason to believe now, in spite of the Stephen Lawrence and other cases, that we really do live in an increasingly homogenous mixed-race society? For this new series, Rob (white), an engineer, and Kevin (black), "in the music business", meet for the first time to take their hidden cameras and microphones to Leeds — "a typical multicultural city". Here they will spend five months testing the job market, public services and, first off, accommodation. Since there is an element of suspense here I won't tell you the result, but what is really unsettling is that the two, who start their odyssey as "pretty cool buddies", end up coming to blows. Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

Sound Stories: Femmes Fatales Radio 3, 11.00am

Sound Stories is not much longer for this world and although I applaud the new Controller Roger Wright's decision to bring more live music to the network at this time of the day, I have not been as vexed by *Sound Stories* as some people. Sometimes the link between subject and the world of music has been tenuous, though that cannot be said of today's subject, the extraordinary and ultimately tragic Isadora Duncan, bizarrely killed when her scarf caught in the wheel of a car: her children had also been killed in a car accident, one of the many incidents that made Duncan a controversial figure. But her position as one of the great innovators of dance is not in question. Today's presenter is Peggy Reynolds.

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00pm Kevin Greening 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 6.45 Newbeat 8.00 Dave Pearce 8.50 Steve Lamacq The Evening Session 10.00 Music Update with Mark Kermode 10.10 John Peel With a session by Black Star Line 12.00am Blue Jam 1.00 Gilles Peterson 4.00 Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester 7.30 Woman 9.30 Richard Allinson 12.00pm Jimmy Young 2.00 Ed Stewart 3.00 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Nick Barnard 8.00 Mike Harding 9.00 The Andy Kershaw Show 10.00 Top of the Pops 12.00 12.30 1.00 1.30 Nicky Horse 12.00am Katrina Leschkaner 3.00 My Datta

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell includes reports on the first final in the one-day triangular series in Australia 12.00pm The Midday News 1.00 Russco and Co 4.00 Drive 7.00 News Extra A full round-up and the main sports bulletin of the day 7.30 John Inverdale's Football Night Coverage of all the night's international 10.00 Litlington 11.00 Late Night Live with Nick Robinson 1.00am Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Breakfast 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00pm Jacques Jucker 1.00 Anna Raeburn 3.00 Peter Dinkley 6.00 The SportCentre 7.00 On Side with Seb Coe 8.00 James White 1.00am Ian Galt and the Creatures of the Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans 9.30 Mark Forrest 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Hamet Scott 6.45 Peter and Geoff 10.00 James Marriot 1.00am Steve Power 4.30 Richard Allen

RADIO 3

6.00am Air on Air with Petros Tselavry, includes a preview of an exhibition of etchings by Picasso. 9.20 Postcard: Beethoven at the Millennium (3/5) 9.45 Carlos Gardel Vintage love songs from the celebrated Argentinian tango singer, accompanied by the guitarists Barberis, Aguilar and Riverol. Recorded in Buenos Aires in 1930. 10.00 Ensemble includes Beethoven (Variations on a Theme from Handel's Judas Maccabaeus) 10.45 Night Waves Laura Cumming discusses the world premiere of Ian Crichton Smith's last work. The visitor, commissioned by the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. 11.30 Jazz Notes Ann Sponson looks at New Orleans trumpeters from Louis Armstrong onwards. 12.00am Composer of the Week: Liszt (1) 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Live from the Adnan Soult Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire. Harrison Munn, piano. Beethoven (Piano Sonata in B flat, Op 71) Chopin (Sonata Minuscula in F minor, Op 33 No 2). 2.00 The BBC Orchestra BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra with Vasily Petrenko and Jeremy Minkley, with the Scottish Festival Singers. 4.00 Choral Evensong Live from Exeter Cathedral. 5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty's guest is Larry Adler, the harmonica player who knew Gershwin. Al Capone and Charlie Chaplin. 7.30 Performance on 3 BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Mark Wigglesworth. Maurice Haddon, cello. Paul Meyer, clarinet. Steven Burnard, viola. Rescigli (Fountains of Rome); Paganini (Violin)

RADIO 4

6.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 6.40 Inshore Forecast 6.45 Prayer for the Day 6.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Anna Hill 6.00am Today with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie 8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Round-up of political news 9.00 Midweek with the Times columnist Libby Purves 9.45 (PM) Serial: The Tulip 9.45 (LW) Daily Service 11.00 Murder, Magic and Medicine Michael O'Donnell explores the secrets of fungi, which may hold the key to revolutionary new drug therapies (5/6) 11.30 Tomorrow at the Same Time American radio corals of the 1930s and 1940s (3/6) (L) 12.00pm (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast 12.00 (PM) News 12.04 You and Yours Consumer news and investigations 1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke 1.30 Board Game Panelists Peter Day, Greg Dyke, Steve Punt and Justin Ughetto Stewart take part in the business quiz, chaired by Nigel Cassidy 2.00 The Archers (L) 2.15 Afternoon Play: The Letters of Abelard and Heloise Lynsey Barker and Anton Lesser read the passionate letters of the 12th-century lovers, confined to monastery and convent by crusades. With the songs of Pierre Abolard 3.00 Gardeners' Question Time Residents of Chardron, Somerset put horticultural queries to Roy Lancaster, Bob Flowerdew and Anne Corbridge 3.30 Going, Going, Gone International collectors game for Christie's corkcree auction (3/5) (L) 3.45 This Scattered Isle Anna Massey narrates part 28 of the history of Britain 4.00 All in the Mind Professor Anthony Clare explores the limits of the human mind

4.30 Thinking Allowed Laura Taylor and guests think the unthinkable about society 5.00 PM Presented by Clare English and Chris Lowe 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Like They've Never Been Gone Mike Coleman's comedy, starring Roy Hudd and Jane Widdall (L) 7.00 The Archers The day of reckoning arrives 7.15 Front Row Mark Lawson presents the night arts programme 7.45 Speaking for Themselves: The Personal Letters of Winston and Clementine Churchill Broadcast earlier as part of Woman's Hour (L) 8.00 The Moral Maze Michael Sorkin presents topical debate, with David Starkey, Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves and David Cook 8.45 Letter from Laraine Fraser Harrison recalls his cowboy childhood in 1940s Liverpool (L) 9.00 Frontiers How deep-sea mining off the coast of Australia could spark a technological revolution 9.30 Midweek Live Conversation Broadcast earlier (L) 10.00 The World Tonight with Justin Webb 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Mark Taperin Stories Kelsey Grammer reads Experience of the MacWilliams with Membranous Group (3/5) 11.00 Late Night on 4: Truly, Madly, Blechley with Liz Fraser, Peter Hugo, Daily 11.15 MacFlintock's Palace New series: Comedy set in a Victorian music-hall. See Choice 11.30 (PM) The Cheese Shop Presents: The Butter Dave Lamb, Gordon Southern, Tim Vennier, Ben Ward and Richard Webb (L) 11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Political update 12.00am News 12.30 The Late Book: Lemons's Tale Written by Ken Saro-Wwa (8/10) 12.45 Shipping Forecast 1.00am World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 680, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648. LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McManus.



CRICKET 34

Fairbrother basks in spotlight on world stage

RK

SPORT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 10 1999

RUGBY UNION 37

Hall calls time on his great Newcastle adventure



Wilkinson makes clean break with Hoddle era against the world champions

England return to what they do best

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

HOWARD WILKINSON had laughed off a lampoon that painted him with a pair of pointy ears and called him Mr Spock. He was in full flow again, enthusing about being the England caretaker manager and beginning a comparison between his own situation and Cinderella's. "Careful," a friendly voice said from the midst of his audience as images of him with the ugly sisters or trying on a slipper embroidered with "FA" flashed across fertile minds.

Wilkinson took the hint, smiled slowly, closed his mouth and covered his eyes with his fingers. So far, nothing has disturbed his equilibrium, nothing has clouded his mood or robbed him of his good humour. He has said all the right things, praised all the right players, made all the right choices and taken full advantage of the goodwill that is being extended towards him precisely because he is not Glenn Hoddle. For someone walking his way through a honeymoon period, he has been a skilful romancer.

True to his word, he named his team to take on France, the world champions, at Wembley tonight, yesterday lunchtime. In the manner of Bobby Robson's fondly recalled declaration — "Here's my team and we're coming to get you" — he laid a list of players out on the desk in front of him and read them out at breakneck speed.

"You probably know who they are anyway," he said.

It was a good team, too, attractive but solid, full of youth and experience, skilful, yet still uncompromising. Wilkinson tried to play down the fact that he will use a 4-4-2 formation rather than the slightly outmoded 3-5-2 system that Hoddle insisted upon, but his suggestion that his way better suited the talent available to him is hard to dispute.

David Beckham, one of England's greatest talents, is immeasurably more happy playing as an orthodox right midfielder player than as a converted wing back. Anyone who saw him destroy Nottingham Forest with his crossing and his prompting last Saturday will relish the prospect of him providing the same kind of service for Alan Shearer and Michael Owen without being compromised by the rigid defensive duties that his previous role demanded.

The same goes for Darren Anderton, who will start the game tonight on the left flank. Tony Adams, one of four Arsenal defenders in the side (the fifth, Nigel Winterburn, was also called into the squad yesterday) is known to be happier playing at the heart of a back four. Hoddle was not flexible enough to change his system to get the best out of the considerable talent available, but that failing seems to have been rectified.



Wilkinson, capturing the lighter mood in the England camp, hides his eyes in response to a newspaper photograph depicting him as Mr Spock. Photograph: Marc Aspland

"The best players England have got this week are better suited to a 4-4-2," Wilkinson said. "I hope they will be happier playing with a flat back four. I don't want anybody ringing me up tonight and telling me they are not because I intend to have a good night's kip."

In many ways, Wilkinson cannot lose tonight. He will be the hero if England beat the team that won the World Cup almost seven months ago to the day. If England are beaten, then they will have been beaten by a fine side and, unless the manner of their vanquishing is utterly dispiriting, he will probably be entrusted with the far more important task of preparing the side for the European championship qualifying tie against Poland at Wembley on March 27.

However, Wilkinson has made it plain he is not in this just to improve his curriculum vitae. If that was the case, he would have taken the easy option, bowed to the wishes of the Football Association and consigned Paul Ince, who is suspended for the Poland game, to a place in the stand. Instead, he has picked him at the heart of the team alongside Jamie Redknapp, his Liverpool colleague.

Wilkinson is going all out for a win. His logic is that



Confident champions... 36
Proven defence... 36
Keane called up... 37

victory over Zinedine Zidane, Marcel Desailly, Nicolas Anelka *et al* will do much to repair the confidence of an England side that was shattered in the last months of Hoddle's troubled reign. He wants his team to go into the match against the Poles believing that they can beat anybody and if Ince helps to achieve that feeling, it will hardly matter that he will not be on the pitch at the end of March.

That, too, perhaps, is why Wilkinson has plumped for the iron defender of Martin Keown over the fiery Rio Ferdinand. Nor can anyone

quibble with his selection of Lee Dixon. He may be 34, but he has been in outstanding form for Arsenal for the past two seasons.

Wilkinson denied that he liked his defenders to be functional and without frills and pointed to his championing of Mel Sierland and Tony Dorigo in his time at Leeds United as evidence of that. Yet he is also aware that Keown, Adams and Dixon know the guiles and pace of Anelka better than most.

Dixon's attitude yesterday was typical of the new mood of optimism and levity that seems to have infused the England camp. He admitted that he had given up hope of ever gaining another cap after being discarded by Terry Venables. He joked about asking Adams to save him a seat at the dinner table on Monday night because he was nervous about arriving late after his call-up. "He did it," he said, "but by the time I got there, everybody else had gone."

He said that his daughter had started crying when he told her that he was going to play for England, because she thought that meant he was leaving Arsenal. "I was helping my son with his homework when I got the call from Howard," he said. "It was maths and to be honest I

PROBABLE WEMBLEY TEAMS									
ENGLAND (4-4-2)					FRANCE (4-4-1-1)				
D Seaman (Arsenal)					F Barthez (AS Monaco)				
L Dixon (Arsenal)	M Keown (Arsenal)	T Adams (Arsenal)	G Le Saux (Chelsea)	I Thornton (AC Parma)	I Blanc (Marseille)	M Desailly (Chelsea)	B Lizarazu (Bayern Munich)		
D Beckham (Manchester United)	P Ince (Liverpool)	J Redknapp (Liverpool)	D Anderton (Tottenham Hotspur)	R Pires (Marseille)	Z Zidane (Juventus)	D Deschamps (Juventus)	E Petit (Arsenal)		
M Owen (Liverpool)		A Shearer (Newcastle United)			Y Jerkovic (Internazionale)				
					N Anelka (Arsenal)				
Referee: H Krug (Germany)									
Kick-off 8pm									

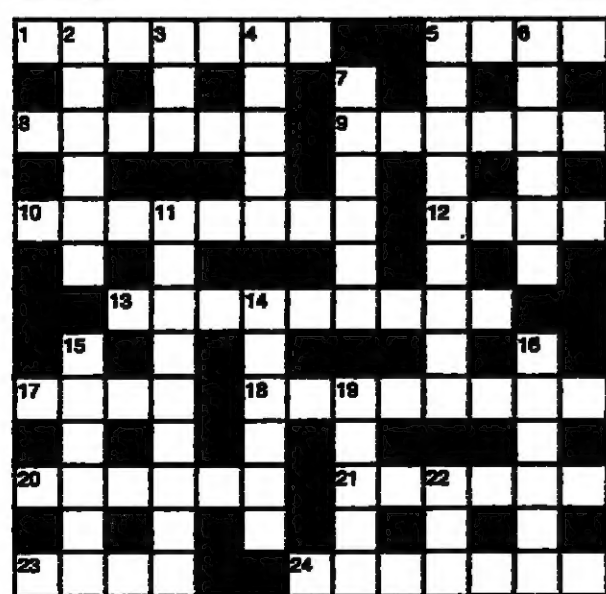
wasn't doing very well. It was a relief to have an excuse to go to the phone."

Wilkinson said that he did not know how he would pitch his first team-talk as England coach before the game, that he would judge it when the moment came. He said also that he would be nervous.

"I don't know what I will be thinking before the game," he said. "I'll probably be telling myself to concentrate. It will be a big occasion for me because making a debut is always one of the biggest games of your life."

Play on Cinderella and may the carriage not turn into a pumpkin when midnight chimes over the Twin Towers.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1637

ACROSS

- 1 Of dark complexion (7)
5 Farewell: a glen (4)
8 One soliciting money (6)
9 Seductive appeal (6)
10 Haunt: common (8)
12 Burglar's haul (4)
13 Ballet duet (3,2,4)
17 Catherine —, survived Henry VIII (4)
18 Ammo store (8)
20 Fish: got on by the hasty (6)
21 Bower (6)
23 Group of cooperating countries (4)
24 Pretended (7)

DOWN

- 2 Barge: passenger rowing boat (6)
3 Scrap: newspaper (derog.) (3)
4 Mongols' Golden throne (5)
5 Rokeby Venus painter (9)
6 Immature insects (6)
7 Winked (eye): faced bowler (6)
11 Equation with second power (9)
14 Patterned silk fabric (6)
15 A scavenger: his Day, Forsyth (6)
16 Hurt: wound (6)
19 Be discordant (3)
22 An insect: computer program error (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1636

- ACROSS: 6 Fruit machine 7 Humble 8 Bedsit 9 Peel
10 Do-gooder 12 Dogwatch 16 Dose 18 Camber
20 Callow 21 Supernatural
DOWN: 1 Furbelow 2 Attend 3 Ragbag 4 Chad 5 Entice
6 Flute 11 Old Glory 13 Opaque 14 Throng 15 Heate
17 Scowl 19 Beef

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Shearer stands by departed coach

By MATT DICKINSON

ALAN SHEARER did not explain whether it was just a natural loyalty or whether he thought Glenn Hoddle truly was the right man for the job, but the England captain was adamant about one thing yesterday. His former coach should not have been sacked.

In a week when his international team-mates have not exactly been shouting "bring back Glenn", it was a jolt to hear Shearer's forthright defence of Hoddle yesterday. It was even more ironic, given that an alleged clash between coach and captain was one of the sticks used to beat Hoddle, but Shearer was a picture of defiance as he swam against the tide of opinion that has washed the former coach out of the England post.

"I didn't think he should go," Shearer said. "I got on very well with him. I thought he was a very good coach and I had a lot of respect for him. The reaction [to the interview in The Times] amazed me. If it is true that he said it along similar lines in May, I am amazed that there was not that reaction then. I'm sure people were offended, but I



Shearer: consulted

know he didn't mean to. I feel sorry for anyone hurt by his comments, but I know he didn't mean that."

Shearer's loyalty is to be admired, and it was evident in an exchange of supportive telephone calls with Hoddle last Thursday. One must presume that he also backed his former coach when he, among a few senior players, was sounded out by the Football Association as they contemplated whether to dismiss Hoddle.

Shearer would not discuss the contents of that conversation with David Davies, the acting chief executive of the FA, but it seems clear he found it uncomfortable, understandably so, for Shearer does not believe that the England players should be consulted when the FA considers Hoddle's successor — something that Davies has threatened to do.

"The powers that be will have to decide the way forward and whether to bring someone else in other than Howard," he said. "They haven't asked the players who it should be yet, and I wouldn't want them to. That is nothing to do with me. That is their job. My job is to play football."

"I'm not a chief executive. I'm not a politician. I have never been asked who should come in as manager before. We don't get paid to make those decisions. We just go out and do our best. We have to be professional about it."

Just as Shearer, ruthless professional that he is, will be

the epitome of conscientiousness when he leads England out tonight for his 47th cap. The first of those came against France in 1992 when he and Gary Lineker were the scorers in a 2-0 victory, and Shearer's tally now stands at an impressive 22.

Shearer takes his role of captaincy seriously — witness Ruud Gullit's declaration yesterday that the striker was his long-term choice as skipper at Newcastle United once Robert Lee leaves — and his standing has been critical this week as Howard Wilkinson has tried to smooth the turbulence left by Hoddle's departure.

"He wants the experienced players to take charge of the situation," Shearer said, "and that is what we have been trying to do. We know there will be great expectations and we need a good performance."

The mood is fine. The new manager has cracked a few jokes and made everyone feel at ease. We can get great confidence from this game. We don't want to go into the Poland game on the back of a defeat. We want to go in with a nice feeling."

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